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SELECT COLLOQUIES

OF

ERASMUS. *Desiderius*

EDITED BY

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PHILADELPHIA:
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.
1902

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INTRODUCTION.

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS was born in Rotterdam about the year 1467, educated at Deventer, and lived for five years in the monastery of Steyn. Dissatisfied with the life of the cloister, he effected his escape by attaching himself, in the capacity of secretary, to the retinue of the Bishop of Cambrai. In the last decade of the fifteenth century Erasmus was a student in the University of Paris, and went to England in 1498, where he was cordially received into the society of English men of letters. In 1506 Erasmus journeyed to Italy and received the coveted degree of Doctor of Theology at Turin. He visited Rome and Venice, making the acquaintance, in the latter city, of the famous printer, Aldus Manutius.

In 1509, with the advent to the throne of Henry VIII., Erasmus hastened back to England. Here he remained five years, teaching Greek and theology at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Finally, in order to carry out certain projects of publication, and because the continental climate pleased him better, he returned and took up his residence at Basel, which continued to be his home, with brief interruptions, until the time of his death, in 1536.¹

Erasmus was a prolific writer. The more serious results of his literary effort are found in his Latin rendering of the New Testament and in his edition of the early fathers of the

¹For a complete account of the life of Erasmus the reader is referred to E. Emerton's *Desiderius Erasmus*, N. Y., 1899, a scholarly and interesting book. Earlier works are Drummond: *Erasmus, his Life and Character as shown in his Correspondence and Works*. 2 vols., London, 1873; also Froude, *Life and Letters of Erasmus*, London and N. Y., 1894.

church, notably his St. Jerome. To posterity, however, he is better known as the author of the "Praise of Folly," an invective against the disorders of the church; the "Adages," a hand-book of classical quotations, and the "Familiar Colloquies," with which we are immediately concerned.

The Colloquies are said to have been begun in the year 1500, shortly after the return of Erasmus from his first visit to England. He was smarting at the time from the loss of the money which he had accumulated during his English residence, and which had been taken from him by the customs official at Dover, in accordance with a law forbidding the exportation of gold from the realm. Deprived of this capital, with which he had projected a journey to that land of his desire, Italy, Erasmus set about the composition of two works, with which he hoped to replenish his exhausted purse. These works were the "Adages" and the "Familiar Colloquies," the latter a

collection of conversations for the use of school-boys, designed to afford them models of the most approved and elegant Latin of the day. The Colloquies grew from small beginnings into a comprehensive series of essays in dialogue form, in which the keen analysis and trenchant wit of Erasmus touched upon all phases of the life and activity of his time. The earlier Colloquies bear the mark of the original design. They are, indeed, little more than childish exercises, vehicles for the introduction of colloquial terms, incidentally inculcating the conventional morals and manners of the age. Such a text-book was much in demand at a time when Latin was the international language of the educated classes, and when, moreover, the increasing knowledge of classical models was stimulating a desire on the part of progressive people to cast out from the language of the monastery the elements of linguistic corruption, and to return, in so far as possible, to the speech of the ancients. No

book had ever appeared that received so large an immediate circulation as did the Colloquies at the time of their appearance in complete form in 1524. One Paris publisher is said to have sold twenty-five thousand copies.

As the Colloquies progressed, however, from the simple exercises originally projected, their character suffered a marked change. From a set of conversational models and formulas of etiquette they developed into a series of caustic satires upon the follies and vices of the day. The early characteristics of the pedagogue gave way to the strong impulses of the social reformer. It is impossible to resist the impression, that as Erasmus grew in experience and fame, he began to develop a fearlessness which was the legitimate product of his dominant position in the world of letters; he came more and more to use the Colloquies as a vehicle for the denunciation of those forms of superstition and hypocrisy, the elimination of which from that grand repository

of religion and morals, the Church, seemed to him a more feasible scheme of reform than the schismatic revolution against which he set his face.

The Colloquies of Erasmus constitute a body of material of unrivaled value for the study of the manners and customs of the sixteenth century. Every phase of early modern life is touched upon. As the dialogues advance there passes before the mind a procession of speaking characters, each clothed in the habit and attributes of his station in life. Priest, monk and scholar; merchant, inn-keeper and sailor; ladies of high and low degree; saints and tricksters; each tells his tale and plies his craft. The background shifts from place to place: the town-house and the villa, ships, inns and coaches form the scenes of action. Foibles and fashions, and those more enduring types of credulity and superstition are turned toward the light; burning questions of the day, of love and mar-

riage, of trade, politics and religion are touched upon ; sometimes threshed out, it may be, with a love of disputation for its own sake, wearisome to the modern reader. But even on such occasions the keen wit of Erasmus comes eventually to the rescue and repays the patience of his auditor.

No writing of its age, it may be truthfully said, so completely bridges the interval between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries. The characters, in the essential elements of their thinking and living, need only a change of costume to fit them for the environment of our own time. The problems presented are the ever-present ones. This is due, no doubt, to the fact, that the characters of the dialogue are not portrayed in caricature, but presented always in an atmosphere of realism. The False Knight is a desperate imposter, but always possible ; the Abbot's view of woman's sphere is perennially characteristic.

This realism is not the rule in literary works of Erasmus' time, and is even exceptional in his own. Indeed, the Colloquies stand in this respect quite by themselves. In the case of popular and humorous writings the tendency was toward a gross exaggeration of outline. The "*Narrenschiff*" of Sebastian Brant, more typical of the humor of the Erasmian age, seems, with its clumsy grotesqueness, to be separated by centuries from the modernism of the Colloquies. No doubt, Erasmus' humanism, stimulated by the nature of his task, the interpretation of contemporaneous ideas in classical diction, contributed much toward the production of the eternally human.¹

¹ The Colloquies have been repeatedly translated into the languages of modern Europe. The English translation of N. Baily, published originally in 1725, and reprinted by Reeves and Turner, London, 1878, 2 vols., has been freely consulted in the preparation of this little volume.

THE OLD MEN'S DIALOGUE.

EUSEBIUS, PAMPIRUS, POLYGAMUS, GLYCION.

Eusebius. What new faces do I see here ? Unless my mind deceives me or my sight fails me, I see three old companions sitting by me : Pampirus, Polygamus and Glycion. Surely it is they.

Pampirus. What are you trying to do with your glass eyes, enchanter ? Pray come up nearer, Eusebius.

Polygamus. Welcome, Eusebius, welcome !

Glycion. All hail to you, best of men !

Eu. One blessing upon you all, my dearest friends. What saint, or more than providential chance has brought us together now, for no one of us has seen another, I believe, this forty years. Mercury with his wand could

not have brought us together more happily.
But what are you doing here?

Pa. We are sitting.

Eu. I see that, but what for?

Po. We are waiting for the coach to carry us to Antwerp.

Eu. Are you going to the fair?

Po. Yes, indeed; but rather as sight-seers than as traders, though each has his special business.

Eu. Good! I too am going thither. But what hinders you that you are not under way?

Po. We haven't been able to come to terms with the waggoner yet.

Eu. They are a trying sort of men; but what do you say to showing them a trick or two?

Po. With all my heart, if it be possible.

Eu. Let us pretend that we are all going afoot.

Po. They'll sooner believe that crabs will fly, than that such heavy fellows as we should make the journey afoot.

Gl. Do you want some good, wholesome advice ?

Po. By all means.

Gl. Well, they are drinking, and the longer they keep at it the more danger there is of our being overturned in the mire.

Po. You must be on hand at dawn, to find a sober coachman.

Gl. Let us hire a coach for us four alone, whereby we may come the sooner to Antwerp. It costs but a little more, nothing to speak of, and this extra cost will be repaid by the many advantages : we shall have more comfortable seats and make the journey much more pleasantly, exchanging anecdotes the while.

Po. Glycion is right ; for on a journey a good companion is of more importance than a coach ; and according to the Greek proverb, we shall have more freedom of talking, not from a wagon, but in a wagon.

Gl. Well, I have arranged it ; let us mount. Come, this seems like living, now that I am

so lucky as to see my dear old companions after so long a separation.

Eu. You seem to be growing young again.

Po. How many years is it, by your reckoning, since we lived together at Paris ?

Eu. I believe it is not less than two and forty.

Po. Then we seemed to be pretty much of an age.

Eu. We were so, very nearly ; or if there was any difference it was slight.

Pa. But what a great difference there seems to be now ; for Glycion has nothing of the old man about him, and Polygamus looks old enough to be his grandfather.

Eu. Indeed he does. What is the reason of it ?

Pa. The reason ? Why, either one stopped still in his tracks, or the other has outrun him.

Eu. Alas, the years ! They do not stay their course, however men may loiter.

Po. Come, tell us truly, Glycion ; how many years do you count ?

Gl. More than ducats.

Po. Well, how many ?

Gl. Sixty and six.

Eu. Truly, a Tithonus' old age, as they say.

Po. By what arts have you kept off old age ? You are not gray, nor are there wrinkles in your skin ; your eyes shine, your teeth are sound and white, you have a fresh color and your body is plump.

Gl. I'll tell you my arts ; but you in turn must tell us how you have come to be old so soon.

Po. Good ; I'll do it. But tell us whither you went when you left Paris.

Gl. I went directly home, and I had been there about a year when I began to consider what career I should choose ; a thing which I believed to have no little bearing upon my future happiness. I sought to discover for what reason some had been successful and others not.

Po. I am astonished that you had so much

forethought, for when you were in Paris no one could have been more heedless.

Gl. My age excused it then. But, my good fellow, you must know. I did not do all this of myself.

Po. Indeed, I thought it strange.

Gl. Before I committed myself to anything, I consulted a certain citizen, a man of standing, who had acquired prudence by long experience, and who enjoyed the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and who was, moreover, in my opinion, the happiest of men.

Eu. You did wisely.

Gl. By this man's advice I took a wife.

Po. Had she a good dowry?

Gl. Only moderate; but, according to the proverb, a match for mine. My own circumstances were quite modest. The affair, however, turned out exactly to my mind.

Po. What was your age then?

Gl. About two and twenty.

Po. O happy man!

Gl. But don't mistake. I do not owe this all to fortune.

Po. How so ?

Gl. I'll tell you. Some are in love before they choose ; I made my choice with judgment first and then loved afterwards. And yet I married my wife more with a view to posterity than for pleasure. With her I lived most agreeably, but not more than eight years.

Po. She left you childless ?

Gl. No ; four children survive, two sons and two daughters.

Po. Do you live as a private person, or do you hold some office ?

Gl. I hold a public office. I might have risen to something higher, but I chose this, because it possessed sufficient dignity to raise me above contempt, and was least liable to annoyances. Nor is it such that any one may object, that I live only for myself. I have something to spare now and then to assist a friend. With this I live content and

have no further ambition. But I so conduct the duties of my office, that it receives an added dignity from me. This I hold to be a more honorable thing than to borrow my dignity from the splendor of my office.

Eu. Beyond all doubt.

Gl. So among my fellow-citizens I have grown old, well liked by all.

Eu. But that is one of the most difficult of all things; wherefore it has been said: He who has no enemies has no friends; and envy is ever a companion of prosperity.

Gl. Envy is always the companion of an extravagant prosperity, but mediocrity is safe. This was always my aim: never to take any advantage to myself from the disadvantages of others. I sought, in so far as I was able, that which the Greeks call *ἀπραξία*. I meddled with no one's affairs, but especially I kept myself free from those things which could not be undertaken without gaining the ill-will of many. If a friend is in need of my assist-

ance, I so aid him, as thereby not to raise up enemies for myself. In case any enmity arises, I soften it by clearing myself of suspicion, or set it right again by kindness, or let it die without taking notice of it. I always seek to avoid strife, but if it comes to pass, I lose my money rather than my friend. On the whole, I act the part of Mitio (1) : I insult no man, but am agreeable to all ; I salute them and return their salutations affably ; I find no fault with anything that is projected or done, nor do I set my own opinion before others, but let every one enjoy his own. What I would have kept secret I entrust to no one, nor am I curious of the secrets of others. If perchance I happen to learn anything, I do not blab it. As for absent persons, I either say nothing at all about them, or speak of them with kindness and civility. A great part of the quarrels that arise among men come from the intemperance of the tongue. I never breed quarrels in others, nor feed them when they exist ;

but wherever occasion offers, I either put an end to them or soften their asperity. By these methods I have hitherto kept clear of envy and have retained the affection of my fellow-citizens.

Pa. Did you not find a single life tiresome ?

Gl. Nothing ever happened to me in the whole course of my life more bitter than the loss of my wife. It was my fondest wish that we might grow old together, enjoying the comfort of our common blessing, our children ; but since Providence saw fit it should be otherwise, I judged that it was best for us both and did not think it reasonable that I should afflict myself with useless grief, particularly when it would do no good to her who had gone.

Po. Had you then never a desire to marry again, especially when your first marriage had turned out so happily ?

Gl. The desire was not wholly absent ; but I had married for the sake of children, and for the sake of my children I did not marry again.

Po. But 'tis a miserable thing to lie alone all the long nights.

Gl. Nothing is hard for a willing mind. Then consider what advantage a single man enjoys. Some people there are, who make the worst of everything. Such an one Crates seemed to be, who wrote an epigram summing up the ills of human life. And the conclusion is this: that it is best not to be born at all. Metrodorus pleases me a great deal better, who discovers everywhere what there is of good. This makes life sweeter. Thus I brought my mind to that temper, that I neither disliked nor longed for anything. Whence it is come to pass, that if any good fortune happen to me, I am neither inflated nor grow haughty; and if any good thing come to pass, I am not much perplexed.

Pa. Truly, if you can do this, you are a greater philosopher than Thales himself.

Gl. If any sort of trouble comes to my mind, as often happens in the lives of mortals,

I put it immediately out of my thoughts, whether it be anger from an affront offered or something shamefully done to me.

Po. But there are some provocations that would rouse the anger of the most patient man alive. Such is often the impudence of servants.

Gl. I suffer nothing to linger in my thoughts. If I can find a remedy, I cure it ; if not, I reason thus with myself : What good will it do me to torment myself about that which will never be the better for it ? In short, I let reason accomplish for me at once that which a little later time itself would bring about, and no vexation is so great that I suffer it to go to bed with me.

Eu. No wonder you don't grow old, who are of that disposition.

Gl. Now, that I may conceal nothing from my friends, I have taken great care not to do anything that might reflect dishonor either upon myself or upon my children; for there is

nothing more troublesome than a guilty conscience. Wherefore, if I have committed a fault, I do not see my rest until I have reconciled myself with God. To be at peace with God is the source of true tranquility of mind, or, as the Greeks call it, εὐθυμία. For they that live thus, men can do them no great injury.

Eu. Are you never tortured with the dread of death ?

Gl. No more than with the day of my birth. I know that I must die, and to live in the fear of death may possibly shorten the days of my life, but it would surely never make them longer. So that I leave this to the powers above, and have no other care but to live happily and well. A man cannot live happily that does not live a good life.

Pa. But I should grow old with weariness, living so long in the same town, even if it were Rome itself.

Gl. A change of abode has indeed something of pleasure in it, but as for long travels, they

may perhaps add to a man's experience, but they are productive of many dangers. I seem to myself to be travelling over the whole world when I contemplate a map, and I can see more in histories than if I rambled by sea and land for twenty years, as did Ulysses. I have a little country place some two miles out of town, where, now and then, from a townsman I become a rustic, and thus refreshed, return again to the city a new man, and greet my friends, and am greeted as if I had returned from the islands newly found.

Eu. Don't you assist health with medicines ?

Gl. I am not much for doctors. I never was bled, nor have I taken pills or potions in all my life. If I feel any weakness coming upon me, I drive it away with spare diet or with the country air.

Eu. Do you give some time to study ?

Gl. I do indeed, and in that I find the greatest pleasure of my life. But I make a diversion of it, and not a task, for I study either for

the pleasure of it, or because it adds value to my life, but not for show. After a meal I take delight in learned conversation, or else have somebody read to me, and I never sit at my books more than an hour at a time. Then I get up and take my lute, and either walk about a little in my chamber and sing to it, or else muse upon what I have read; or if I have a good companion with me, I talk about it, and after a while return to my book again.

Eu. But tell me truly: do you feel none of the infirmities of old age, which are said to be so many?

Gl. My sleep is not so sound, nor my memory, unless I make a special effort to retain something, so good. Well, I have now acquitted myself of my promise. I have exposed to you those magical arts, by means of which I have kept myself young, and now let Polygamus tell us truthfully whence he has acquired such a fullness of old age.

Po. Indeed, I will hide nothing from such trusty companions.

Eu. You will certainly tell it to those who are discreet.

Po. You know yourselves that when I was at Paris I was no enemy of Epicurus.

Eu. We remember it very well. But we thought that you had left your manners with your youth at Paris.

Po. Of the many mistresses I had there, I took one home, who was big with child.

Eu. What, into your father's house?

Po. Exactly; but I pretended that she was the wife of one of my friends, who was to come to her a little later.

Gl. Did your father believe it?

Po. He smelt the matter out in three or four days' time, and then there was a quarrel. However, in this interval I kept on with my feasting, gaming, and other extravagant diversions. In short, when my father continued to scold me, saying he would have no such hussies under his roof, and even threatening to disown me, at last I took my leave, re-

moved to another place with my pullet, and she brought me some young chickens.

Pa. Whence had you money all this time ?

Po. My mother gave me some by stealth, and I ran head over heels into debt.

Eu. Was anybody fool enough to lend you ?

Po. There are some persons who will trust a spendthrift sooner than any other person.

Pa. And what next ?

Po. At last my father proceeded to disinherit me in good earnest. Some friends, however, interposed and made up the breach on this condition: that I should renounce the French woman and marry out of my own country.

Eu. Was she your wife ?

Po. Some words had passed between us in the future tense, but our relations had been in the present tense.

Eu. How was it possible for you to leave her then ?

Po. It afterwards came to light that my

French woman had a French husband, from whom she had eloped some time before.

Eu. So you have a wife now ?

Po. None, except the present one, who is my eighth.

Eu. The eighth ! Why then you were named Polygamus by way of prophecy. Perhaps they all died without children.

Po. Nay, there was not one of them but left a few youngsters in my house.

Eu. I had rather have as many hens in my house. They would lay me eggs. Are you not weary of wifeing ?

Po. So weary of it that if this my eighth should die to-day, I should marry the ninth to-morrow. Nay, it vexes me that I may not have two or three at a time, when one cock has so many hens.

Eu. Indeed I don't wonder, Mr. Cock, that you are no fatter, and that you have brought old age upon yourself to this degree, for nothing brings on old age faster than excessive

and unreasonable drinking, unbridled love of women and immoderate venery. But who maintains your family all this time ?

Po. A small estate came to me by the death of my father, and I work hard with my hands.

Eu. Have you given up your studies then ?

Po. Altogether. I have given up horses for asses, and from a master of seven arts I am become a workman of one art.

Eu. Poor man ! So many times you were obliged to be a mourner, and so many times a widower !

Po. I never lived single more than ten days, and a new wife always put an end to the old mourning. You have in truth the substance of my life, and I wish Pampirus would give us a narration of his. He bears his age well enough, for, if I am not mistaken, he is a year or two older than I.

Pa. Indeed, I'll tell it, if you have the patience to hear such stuff.

Eu. Nay, it will be a pleasure to hear it.

Pa. When I went home, my old father began to press me earnestly to enter into some settled course of life, whereby I might add something to my patrimony, and after long deliberation a mercantile career was chosen.

Po. I wonder that kind of life seemed most attractive to you.

Pa. I was naturally eager to see new things; the various countries and cities; to hear foreign languages, and to note the customs and manners of men. Trading seemed the best adapted for this purpose. Moreover, from these pursuits experience is acquired.

Po. But a wretched one, which is so often purchased with great hardships.

Pa. That is true. Well, my father counted out a good share of his means, and with all things favorable I began my career. At the same time I courted a wife with a good dowry, but handsome enough to have gone off without a portion.

Eu. Did you succeed?

Pa. No. Before I came back home I had lost all, capital and interest.

Eu. Perhaps by shipwreck.

Pa. By shipwreck, indeed, for we ran upon rocks more dangerous than those of Malea.

Eu. In what sea did you run upon this rock or what is its name?

Pa. I cannot tell what sea it is in, but it is a rock infamous for the destruction of many. They call it "*alea*" in Latin. How you call it in Greek I cannot say.

Eu. Fool that you were!

Pa. Nay, my father was a greater fool to trust a youngster with such a sum of money.

Gl. Well, what did you do next?

Pa. Nothing at all, but I began to think of hanging myself.

Gl. Was your father, then, so hard? The matter might be remedied; for if allowance is to be made to one that makes his first attempt, much more ought to be made for one who tries all things.

Pa. Perhaps you are right. In the meantime I lost my wife, for as soon as the maid's parents came to understand my condition, they renounced the proposed relationship, and to make the matter worse, I was head over ears in love.

Gl. Alas for you! What did you propose after that?

Pa. To do as is usual in desperate cases. My father had cast me off, my fortune was gone, my wife was lost, I was everywhere called a sot, a spendthrift and a prodigal. What was there to do? I began to deliberate seriously with myself, whether I should hang myself, or cast myself into a monastery.

Eu. It was a cruel choice. I know that you would choose the easier way of dying.

Pa. Nay, that which seemed to me the crueller, so hateful was I to myself.

Gl. And yet many people cast themselves into monasteries that they may live there more comfortably.

Pa. Having gotten together a little something for the journey, I stole away from home.

Gl. Where did you go?

Pa. Into Ireland. There I became a canon of that order that wear linen on the outside and woolen next the skin.

Gl. Did you indeed spend a winter with the Irish?

Pa. No. By the time I had been among them two months, I took ship to Scotland.

Gl. What displeased you amongst them?

Pa. Nothing, except that I thought their discipline too mild for the merits of one who was not worthy of hanging.

Gl. Well, what happened in Scotland?

Pa. There I changed my linen habit for a leathern one, among the Carthusians.

Eu. These are the men who are wholly dead to the world.

Pa. It seemed so to me when I heard them singing.

Gl. What? Do the dead sing? But how many months did you spend with the Scotch?

Pa. Almost six.

Gl. Most wonderful constancy !

Eu. What offended you there ?

Pa. It seemed to me a lazy, effeminate sort of life, and then I found there many who were not very sound of brain by reason of their solitude. I had but little brain myself, and I was afraid I might lose what I had.

Po. Whither did you take your next flight ?

Pa. Into France. There I found some clothed all in black, of the order of St. Benedict, who testify by the color of their clothes that they are mourners in this world, and amongst them were some who for their upper garment wore haircloth, like a net.

Gl. A grievous mortification of the flesh.

Pa. Here I stayed eleven months.

Eu. What was the matter that you did not stay there for good ?

Pa. Because I found there more ceremonies than true piety. Moreover, I heard there were some much holier, upon whom Bernard had

enjoined severer discipline, the black habit being changed into a white one. With these I lived ten months.

Eu. What disgusted you there?

Pa. Nothing much. I found them very good company, but the Greek proverb ran in my mind, "One must either eat turtles or let them alone." Therefore I made up my mind either not to be a monk, or to be a monk all over. I heard there were some of the order of St. Bridget, really heavenly men, and to them I betook myself.

Eu. How many months did you stay there?

Pa. Two days—no, not quite that.

Gl. Did their kind of life please you no better than that?

Pa. They take nobody in but those that will profess themselves at once; but I was not yet come to that degree of madness to put my neck so easily into a halter which I could never put off again. And as often as I heard the nuns singing, the thought of my lost bride tormented my soul.

Gl. Well, and what then ?

Pa. My mind was inflamed with the love of holiness, but up to that time I had not been able to satisfy my spirit. At last, as I was walking up and down, I fell in amongst some cross-bearers. This badge pleased me at first sight, but the variety hindered me from making a choice, some carrying a white cross, some a green, some a red, some a party colored cross; some a single, some a double, some a quadruple cross, and others some of one form, some of another, and I, that I might leave nothing untried, carried some of every sort. But I found in reality that there was a great difference in carrying a cross on a gown or on a coat, and carrying it in the heart. At last, tired with seeking, it came into my mind that to arrive at universal holiness all at once I would take a journey to the Holy Land, and so return home laden with sanctimony.

Po. And did you go there ?

Pa. Yes.

Po. Where did you get the money for the journey ?

Pa. I wonder it never occurred to ask that before, and to have made that inquiry a long time ago. But you know the proverb: A man of art will make his living anywhere.

Gl. What art do you carry with you ?

Pa. Palmistry.

Gl. Where did you learn it ?

Pa. What difference does that make ?

Gl. From what master ?

Pa. From my stomach, which teaches everything. I foretold things past, present, and to come.

Gl. And did you know anything of the matter ?

Pa. Nothing at all; but I made bold guesses, and ran no risk, having secured my money in advance.

Po. And was so ridiculous an art sufficient to maintain you ?

Pa. It was, and two servants beside. There

is everywhere such a number of fools, both men and women. However, when I came to Jerusalem, I attached myself to the train of a rich nobleman, seventy years of age, who vowed he could never die in peace unless he had first visited Jerusalem.

Eu. Did he leave a wife at home ?

Pa. Yes, and six children.

Eu. O impious, pious old man ! Well, did you come back holy ?

Pa. Shall I tell you the truth ? I came back worse than I went.

Eu. So, I am to understand, your love of religion had cooled.

Pa. Nay, it had grown hotter, for coming back into Italy, I entered the army.

Eu. What, did you look for religion in war ? For what can be more impious ?

Pa. It was a holy war.

Eu. Against the Turks, perhaps ?

Pa. Nay, holier than that, as they indeed preached at the time.

Eu. What was it ?

Pa. Pope Julius the Second made war against the French, and the experience of many things which it gives a man made me fancy a soldier's life.

Eu. Of many things indeed, but wicked ones.

Pa. So I found out afterwards. Still I lived harder there than in the monasteries.

Eu. What did you do after this ?

Pa. My mind began to be wavering as to whether I should return to my business of trading, which I had laid aside, or press on in search of religion that fled before me. In the meantime it came into my mind that I might unite the two.

Eu. What, be a merchant and a monk together ?

Pa. Why not? There is nothing more religious than the order of mendicants, and there is nothing more like trading. They go everywhere by land and sea; they see much and

hear many things; they enter into the houses of common people, of noblemen, and of kings.

Eu. Ay, but they do not trade for gain.

Pa. Very often, and with better success than we do.

Eu. Which of these orders did you choose?

Pa. I tried them all.

Eu. Did none of them please you?

Pa. Yes, they all pleased me, if only I might have gone at once to trading; but I reflected that I must sweat for a long time in the choir before any business would be entrusted to me. So now I began to think how I might get to be an abbot. But, thought I, Delia does not favor all alike, and the pursuit is often long; so, having spent eight years in this manner, hearing of my father's death, I returned home, and by my mother's advice married and betook myself to my old business of trade.

Gl. Pray tell me, when you changed your coat so often, and were transformed, as it

were, into another sort of creature, how could you preserve your proper dignity?

Pa. Why not as well as those who in the same comedy play several parts?

Eu. Tell us now, truly, you who have tried every sort of life, which do you like the best?

Pa. All of them suited me alike. I liked none better than this which I am now following.

Eu. But there are many inconveniences attending trade.

Pa. Indeed there are; but seeing that there is no state of life entirely free from them, I make the best of this which is my lot. But there still remains Eusebius, who will not deem it a burden to acquaint his friends with the events of his own career.

Eu. Nay, with the whole of it, if it pleases you to hear it, for it has not many acts.

Gl. It will be a great favor.

Eu. When I returned to my own country, I deliberated for a year what mode of living to

select, and examined myself carefully, to determine toward what employment my inclination led me, and for what I was fit. In the meantime a prebend, as they call it, was offered me. It was a good fat benefice, and I accepted it.

Gl. That sort of life is not well spoken of.

Eu. To me, as human affairs go, it seemed a thing well worth accepting. Do you deem it a slight thing to have such agreeable things fall out of the sky: a position of dignity; a fine, well-furnished house; a large revenue; an honorable society, and thereto a church, where, when you have a mind to, you may perform the offices of religion ?

Pa. This luxury is what offends me; this and the infamy of their concubinage, and because a great many of that sort of men have a hatred of letters.

Eu. I do not regard what others do, but what I ought to do myself; and I attach myself to the better sort, if perchance I may not be able to render them better.

Po. And is that the life you have always lived ?

Eu. Always, except four years, when I lived at Padua.

Po. What did you do there ?

Eu. These years I divided as follows: a year and a half I gave to the study of medicine, and the rest of the time to theology.

Po. Why this arrangement ?

Eu. That I might better manage both my soul and my body, and also be helpful at times by way of counsel to my friends. I preached sometimes as best I could. Thus, up to this time, I have led a very quiet life, content with a single benefice, not looking about for more, and I should have refused them had them been offered me.

Pa. I wish we might learn how the rest of our old companions have passed their lives, those who lived in such close intimacy with us.

Eu. I can give you some news of them, but I see we are not far from the city. Let us

then, if you like, seek the same inn, and there we will talk over the rest at leisure.

Hugh (a wagoner): Here, you one-eyed scoundrel, where did you find that load of trash?

Harry (a wagoner). Where are you carrying that harlotry, you pimp?

Hugh. You ought to dump those frozen-up old fellows somewhere into a bed of nettles to warm them up again.

Harry. See that you shoot that gang of yours into a pond, to cool them off; they are too warm.

Hugh. I am not used to dumping my load.

Harry. No? I saw you, a little while ago, overturn half a dozen Carthusians into the mire, so that, although they went in white, they came out black, and you stood by grinning as if you had done something fine.

Hugh. That was all right. They were all asleep, and added a dead weight to my wagon.

Harry. But these old gentlemen, by talk-

ing all the way, have made my wagon go light. I never saw a better lot.

Hugh. Generally you don't like such passengers.

Harry. But these are good old fellows.

Hugh. How do you know that?

Harry. Because they made me drink excellent ale three times by the way.

Hugh. Ha! ha! ha! Then they are good to you indeed.

PROBLEMS.

CURIO AND ALPHIUS.

Curio. I should be glad to learn something of you, who are so well informed in many things, if it would not be burdensome to you.

Alphius. Well, Curio, go on. Propose what questions you have a mind to, and be in fact what you are in name.

Cu. I do not mind being called Curio, so long as you do not add to it for a final syllable that animal hateful both to Venus and to Minerva.

Al. Speak out, then, what you wish.

Cu. I should like to know what it is that we call heavy and light.

Al. By the same token you might ask what hot and cold is, too. You should put that ques-

tion to a porter rather than to me, or, if you prefer, to an ass, who will tell you whether the burden is heavy or light by hanging his ears.

Cu. But I am looking not for an asinine, but for a philosophical solution.

Al. Heavy is that which naturally tends downwards, and light that which mounts upwards.

Cu. How comes it about then that the Antipodes, which are under us, do not fall into the sky, which is under them ?

Al. They may as well wonder why you do not fall into the heaven that is not under you but over you, for the heaven is above all that are embraced within it; nor are the Antipodes under you any more than you are above them. They may be opposite us, but not beneath us. You might as well wonder why the rocks, which the land of the Antipodes sustains, do not fall and break into the heavens.

Cu. What then is the natural center of

heavy bodies? And on the other hand of light bodies?

Al. All heavy bodies are by a natural motion carried toward the earth, and light bodies toward heaven. We are not speaking now of a violent or animal motion.

Cu. Is there a motion that is called animal?

Al. Yes.

Cu. What is it?

Al. It is that which is carried according to the four positions of the body: forward, backward, to the right and left, and in a circle, and in the beginning and end is swifter, and slowest in the middle, because in the beginning strength adds alacrity, and near the end the hope of coming to what the animal strives for.

Cu. I don't know how it is with other animals, but I have a maid-servant who is weary before she begins and tired before she ends. But let us return to your discussion.

Al. By a natural motion, I say, heavy things are carried downward, and the heavier

anything is, by so much swifter motion is it carried toward the earth, and the lighter it is, by so much swifter motion is it carried toward heaven. It is quite otherwise with a violent motion, which is swifter at the start, and grows slower by degrees, which happens otherwise in a natural motion, as an arrow shot into the air and a stone falling from on high.

Cu. I thought men ran about the globe like little ants on a great ball; they stick on everywhere and none fall off.

Al. That is to be attributed to the unevenness of the surface of the ball, and a certain roughness in the feet of the ants, which, indeed, all insects have in common, and, lastly, to the lightness of their bodies. If you don't believe me, make a glass globe very smooth and slippery, and you will see that only those ants do not fall that are on the upper side of it.

Cu. If any god should bore into the middle

of the earth, quite down to the Antipodes, in a perpendicular line through the center, as cosmographers are accustomed to represent the structure of the earth with wooden globes, then if you were to throw a stone into the orifice, where would it go?

Al. To the center of the earth; there is the resting place of all heavy bodies.

Cu. What if the Antipodes should let fall a stone from their side?

Al. Then one stone would meet the other at the center, and each would come to rest.

Cu. But listen. If what you said just now be true: that a natural motion by its progress grew more and more violent, then, if nothing hindered, a stone or lead cast into the hole, by reason of the violence of its motion, would pass beyond the center, and having got beyond the center, the motion would grow more violent still.

Al. Lead would never come to the center, except in a molten condition; but a stone, if it

did pass the center with so violent a motion, would go first more slowly, and then return to the center again, not otherwise than as a stone thrown up into the air returns again to earth.

Cu. But returning back again by its natural motion, and again recovering force, it would go beyond the center, and so the stone would never come to rest.

Al. It would come to rest at last by running beyond, and then running back again, until it came to an equilibrium.

Cu. But if there be no vacuum in nature, then the hole must be full of air.

Pl. I grant that.

Cu. Then a body that is by nature heavy will be hanging in air.

Al. Why not? As steel does, held up by magnets. What wonder is it that one stone hangs in the very middle of the air when the whole earth laden with so many rocks hangs in the same manner?

Cu. But where is the center of the earth?

Al. Where is the center of a circle ?

Cu. But that is an indivisible point. If the center of the earth be so small, whosoever bores through the center will take it away, and then heavy bodies will have no place to tend to.

Al. Now you are indeed talking nonsense.

Cu. Don't be angry, I beg of you. What I say is for the sake of gaining information. If any one should bore through the earth, and not through the center itself, say one hundred furlongs to the side of it, where would a stone fall then ?

Al. It would pass straight through the hole; that is, not exactly straight, but toward the center, and so when it came to the middle, it would come to rest against the earth on the left hand if the center were on the left hand.

Cu. But what is it that makes a body heavy or light ?

Al. That's a question that God must answer for you: why he made fire the lightest of all

things, and air next to that; why the earth the heaviest, and the water next to that.

Cu. Why then do watery clouds hang high up in the air ?

Al. Because by the attraction of the sun they conceive a fiery nature, as smoke is forced by a violent heat out of green wood.

Cu. Why then do they sometimes fall with such weight that they level mountains into a plain ?

Al. Condensation and density add a weight to them, and they may be imagined to be held up by the air under them, even as a thin plate of iron is held up on the surface of water.

Cu. Do you think, then, that whatever has most of the nature of fire is lightest, and that which has most of the earth heaviest ?

Al. You are not far from the mark.

Cu. But air is not all of a lightness, nor earth of a heaviness, and it is the same perhaps with water.

Al. That is not strange, because those things

which you have mentioned are not pure elements, but combined of various elements, so that it is probable that that earth is the lightest which has the most fire or air mixed with it, and that water the heaviest which has the most of the heavier earth mixed with it, as, I think, is the case with sea water, and that out of which salt is made. In like manner that air which is nearest to water or earth is the heaviest, or, at least, it is certainly not so light as that which is further from the earth.

Cu. Which has most of the nature of earth in it, a stone or lead?

Al. A stone.

Cu. And yet lead is heavier in proportion than a stone.

Al. The density is the cause. That proceeds from its solidity. A stone is more porous, and so contains more air than lead. Hence it is that we see a certain kind of dry earth which, if we throw it into water, will swim and not sink. So we see whole fields floating,

because they are held up by the hollow roots of reeds and other marsh herbage, interwoven with each other.

Cu. Perhaps it is from this cause that a pumice-stone is so light.

Al. Because it is so full of pores, and, moreover, very much burnt with fire, for they are thrown out of burning places.

Cu. Why is it that a cork is so light?

Al. That has been answered already : its open texture is the cause.

Cu. Which is heavier, lead or gold?

Al. Gold, in my opinion.

Cu. But yet gold seems to have more of a fiery nature.

Al. Because, as Pindar says, it shines by night, like fire?

Cu. Yes.

Al. But gold has a greater density.

Cu. How is that known?

Al. Goldsmiths will tell you that neither silver, lead nor copper, nor any metal of the

kind, can be hammered out so thin as gold. And, for the same reason, philosophers reason that there is nothing more liquid than honey and oil, because if these be spread out upon a surface, their moisture will cover most widely, and be the longest in drying.

Cu. But which is the heavier, oil or water?

Al. If you speak of linseed oil, I take oil to be the heavier.

Cu. Why, then, does oil float on water?

Al. Lightness is not the cause, but the fiery nature of the oil, and a peculiar nature in all fat things, that is antagonistic to water, as is the case with the herb called *ὑβυπτος*.

Cu. Why then does not iron swim when it is red hot?

Al. Because it is not a natural heat, and therefore the sooner penetrates the water, because the intensity of the heat dispels the resisting liquid. So an iron wedge sinks sooner to the bottom than an thin plate.

Cu. Which is the more difficult to endure, hot iron or cold?

Al. Hot.

Cu. Then it is heavier.

Al. It is; if it be easier to carry burning straw in your hand than a cold flint.

Cu. What is the cause that one wood is heavier or lighter than another ?

Al. Its density or porosity.

Cu. But I knew one of the King of England's household, who showed us some wood one time at a banquet, which he said was the wood of the aloes tree. It was so solid that it seemed to be a stone, and withal so light in the hand sustaining it that it seemed a reed, and if anything lighter than a dry reed. Being put into wine (for he was of the opinion that it would expel poison), it sank at once to the bottom, as swiftly as lead.

Al. Neither solidity nor porosity is always the cause, but there is a peculiar occult association of things, which is the reason why some things embrace or shun other things, just as a magnet attracts steel and a vine avoids a cab-

bage, and a flame will reach toward naptha, set in a lower place, although it be at some distance. And yet naptha is naturally heavy and flame light.

Cu. All sorts of money floats in quicksilver. Gold only sinks, and is enclosed in it, and yet quicksilver is a very liquid substance.

Al. I can offer no solution for that, except a peculiar allied quality; then, too, quicksilver was made for the refinement of gold.

Cu. Why does the river Arethusa run under the Sicanian sea, and not rather float upon it, since you say that sea water is heavier than river water ?

Al. A natural disagreement is the cause, but it is a secret one.

Cu. Why do swans float when men, going into the same water, sink to the bottom ?

Al. The cause is not only the lightness and hollowness of their feathers, but a certain dryness which the water shuns. Hence it is that if you pour wine or water into a cloth or

piece of linen that is very dry, it draws itself into a ball; but put it into a wet one, and it spreads itself out at once. In like manner if you pour any liquid into a dry cup, or in one the brim of which is greased, and pour in a little more than the cup will hold, the liquid at once rounds up toward the center, and will not run over the brim.

Cu. Why can't ships carry so much in rivers as on the sea?

Al. Because river water is thinner, and for the same reason birds poise themselves more easily in a thick air than in one that is much thinner.

Cu. Why does not the fish called "*flota*" sink?

Al. Because its skin, having been dried in the sun, is made lighter, and so resists the moisture.

Cu. Why does iron that has been drawn out into a wide plate float while the same in narrower compass sinks?

Al. Its dryness is partly the cause, and partly because of the air that gets in between the plate and the water.

Cu. Which is the heavier, wine or water?

Al. I believe wine will not give place to water.

Cu. How comes it about then that they that buy wine at the vintner's sometimes find water instead of wine at the bottom of the cask?

Al. Because wine has a certain oiliness which resists water. The reason is plain, because the richer the wine is, with so much more difficulty does it mingle with water, and being set on fire, it burns the more fiercely.

Cu. What is the reason that no living creature will sink in the lake Asphaltitis?

Al. I do not profess to be able to furnish a solution for all the miracles of nature. She has some secrets which she will have us admire without understanding.

Cu. Why is a lean man heavier than a fat one, if both are of equal size?

Al. Because bones are more solid than flesh, and therefore more weighty.

Cu. Why is the same man heavier when he is fasting than after he has eaten his dinner, and so added weight to his body?

Al. Because by eating and drinking the spirits are increased, and they add a lightness to the body. Hence it comes that a merry man is lighter than a sorrowful one, and a dead man heavier than a living one.

Cu. But how is it that the same man can make himself heavier or lighter as he chooses?

Al. By holding in his breath he makes himself lighter, and by breathing it out heavier. So a bladder when blown and closely tied floats, but when it is burst, it sinks. But when will Curio cease to croak out his "Why?"

Cu. I'll leave off if you will tell me just a few things more. Is heaven heavy or light?

Al. Whether it is light or heavy, I cannot say; certainly it cannot be heavy, for it is of the nature of fire.

Cu. Then what does the old proverb mean:
“If the heavens should fall?”

Al. Because an ignorant antiquity, following Homer, believed the heavens to be made of iron; but Homer called it iron from the likeness of its color, not its weight, as we might term ashy that which is of the color of ashes.

Cu. Is there any color in the sky?

Al. Not really; but it appears so to us because of the air and water that lie between us and it; just as the sun appears sometimes to be red, sometimes yellow, and sometimes white, when, in fact, it has no such changes. In like manner the colors of the rainbow are not in the sky, but in the moist air.

Cu. But to come to a close. You confess that there is nothing higher than the heavens, which way soever it covers the orb of the earth?

Al. I do confess it.

Cu. And nothing deeper than the center of the earth?

Al. No.

Cu. Of all things in the world, what is the heaviest?

Al. Gold, I should say.

Cu. I differ very much from you in this point.

Al. Do you know of anything that is heavier than gold?

Cu. Yes, I do, and much heavier, too.

Al. Then take your turn and teach me, for I confess I don't know of anything that is.

Cu. Must not that be the heaviest thing in the world that forced those fiery spirits down from the very vortex of heaven to the bottom of hell? (and that, you know, is placed in the center of the earth.)

Al. I confess it; but what is that?

Cu. Sin, which plunges thither the souls of men, which Maro calls sparks of pure ether.

Al. If you have a mind to pass over to that kind of philosophy, I confess that both gold and lead are as light as feathers when compared with sin.

Cu. How then can they that are hampered with this sort of burden mount up to heaven?

Al. Truly I do not see.

Cu. They that prepare themselves for running and leaping not only lay aside all heavy things, but make themselves light by holding their breath. But in this race and leap which we take to heaven, we do not seek to throw aside that which is heavier than any stone or lead.

Al. Yes, but we should do so, if we had but one grain of sound understanding.

ON EARLY RISING.

NEPHALIUS AND PHILYPNUS.

(Nephalius. I wanted to see you this morning, Philypnus, but your servants said that you were not at home.

Philypnus. They did not tell you what was absolutely untrue. I was not at home to you, it is true, but I was never more at home to myself.

Ne. What riddle is this?

Ph. You know the old proverb: I do not sleep at all. Besides this you cannot have forgotten the pleasant joke of Nasica. When he went to visit his old friend Ennius, the maid, by her master's command, told him her master was not at home. Nasica saw how the land lay and departed. Afterwards Ennius, in his turn, coming to Nasica's house, asked

the boy whether his master was within. Nasica shouted out from the inner room, saying, "I am not at home." Ennius, who recognized his voice, cried, "You rascal, don't I know you when I hear you speak? "You are a greater rascal," replied Nasica, "who won't give credit to me myself, when I was satisfied to believe your servant."

Ne. Perhaps you were very busy.

Ph. Nay, most agreeably at leisure.

Ne. Again you perplex me with riddles.

Ph. Then I'll speak plainly, and not call a fig by any other name.

Ne. Say on.

Ph. In short, I was fast asleep.

Ne. What do you say? Why it was after eight o'clock! And the sun rises this month before four.

Ph. The sun is at liberty to rise at midnight, so far as I am concerned, so that I am permitted to sleep my fill.

Ne. But was this by accident, or is it your custom?

Ph. Well, I am pretty much used to it.

Ne. But the habit of evil is most pernicious.

Ph. Nay, no sleep is so sweet as that which one gets after sunrise.

Ne. At what hour do you generally leave your bed ?

Ph. Between four and nine.

Ne. A pretty space of time indeed. Queens are scarcely so long in dressing. But how came you to acquire this agreeable custom ?

Ph. Because we spend most of the night in eating and drinking, games and jollity, and we repair this dissipation with morning sleep.

Ne. I doubt if I ever saw a man more desperately spendthrift than yourself.

Ph. It seems to me rather parsimony than prodigality, for in the meantime I neither burn my candles nor wear out my clothes.

Ne. Parsimony indeed, to preserve glass, that you may destroy jewels. The philosopher thought quite otherwise, who, when he was asked what was the most precious of all

things, replied, "Time." Moreover, when it is evident that the dawn is the best part of the whole day, you delight in destroying the most precious part of that most precious thing.

Ph. Is that destroyed which is given to the body?

Ne. Nay, it is rather taken from the body, which is most agreeably affected, and thrives best when it is refreshed by timely and moderate sleep, supplemented by early rising.

Ph. But 'tis sweet to sleep.

Ne. What can be sweet to him who has no sense of anything?

Ph. Why that alone is sweet, to have no sense of trouble.

Ne. At that rate those are most happy who sleep in their graves, for they are never disturbed with troublesome dreams.

Ph. They say the body is best fed by sleep.

Ne. Such is the food of dormice, not of men. The beasts, who are made only to eat, are

rightly crammed with food; but how does it become a man to heap up fat, merely that he may trudge on with the greater burden? Tell me, if you had a servant, would you have him fat, or brisk and fit for any employment?

Ph. But I am no servant.

Ne. No matter; 'tis enough for me that you had rather have one ready for work than one well stuffed.

Ph. Certainly I should.

Ne. Now Plato says: The mind of man is the man, and the body nothing more than the mansion or the instrument. You will admit, I suppose, that the soul is the principal part of the man, and the body but the servant of the mind.

Ph. Let it be so if you wish.

Ne. Since you would not have an unwieldy servant, but one brisk and agile, why do you then provide for your mind a servant fat and slothful?

Ph. I am overcome with truth.

Ne. Note this other loss. As the mind far excels the body, so, you will confess, the riches of the mind far exceed the goods of the body.

Ph. What you say is very probable.

Ne. But of all the goods of the mind, wisdom holds the chief place.

Ph. I grant it.

Ne. For obtaining this no time is more fit than the early morning, when the newly risen sun gives fresh vigor and life to all things, and dispels those fumes which are exhaled from the stomach, and are wont to cloud the mansion of the mind.

Ph. All this I don't deny.

Ne. Now just reckon up how much learning you might obtain in those four hours which you consume in unseasonable sleep.

Ph. Truly a great deal.

Ne. It is my experience that more may be done at study in one hour of the morning than in three of the afternoon, and that without any detriment to the body.

Ph. I have heard so.

Ne. Consider further: If you should add together the loss of each day, what a vast sum would be the result !

Ph. Vast indeed.

Ne. He who rashly squanders money and jewels is deemed a spendthrift, and a guardian is appointed over him. But he who loses these goods of far greater value, is he not a spendthrift of far deeper dye ?

Ph. It certainly appears so, if we weigh the matter carefully.

Ne. Consider further that which Plato wrote: That there is nothing fairer, nothing more to be admired, than wisdom, which, if it could be seen by the corporeal eye, would draw to itself an incredible number of worshippers.

Ph. But she is not capable of being seen.

Ne. Not with the eyes of the body, I admit, but she is to be seen with the eyes of the mind, which is the better part of man. And

where the love is incredible, there must necessarily be the highest pleasure, as often as the mind has intercourse with such a mistress.

Ph. What you say is very probable.

Ne. Go now, if it seems good to you, and barter this enjoyment for sleep, that image of death.

Ph. But in the meantime I lose my evening's entertainment.

Ne. Those things are well lost in exchanging worst for best, shameful for honorable, the most vile for the most precious. He has happily lost his lead who has exchanged it for gold. Nature has appointed the night for sleep; the rising sun recalls all animals, and especially man, to their several duties. They who sleep, says St. Paul, sleep in the night, and they who are drunken, are drunken in the night. What, then, is more unseemly, when all animals rouse themselves with the sun, some, indeed, before his appearance, and greet his appearance with song; when the

elephant adores the rising sun, than that man alone should lie snoring long after the sun's rising? As often as his golden splendor floods your chamber, does he not seem thus to upbraid you as you lie sleeping: "Fool, why are you eager to destroy the best part of your life? I shine not for this, that you may hide yourself and sleep, but that you may attend to your honest employments." No man lights a lamp that he may sleep, but that he may pursue some sort of labor, and for this lamp, of all the fairest, have you no greeting but a snore?

Ph. You declaim well.

Ne. Not well, but truly. But, come, I doubt not you have heard this saying of Hesiod: "'Tis too late to spare when all is spent."

Ph. Very often; for "In the middle of the cask the wine is best."

Ne. But in life the first part, youth, is best.

Ph. So it is in truth.

Ne. And the morning is to the day what

youth is to life. Do not they then act foolishly who lose their life in trifles and their morning hours in sleep ?

Ph. So it appears.

Ne. Is there any possession that may be compared to a man's life.

Ph. No, not the whole Persian treasure.

Ne. And would you not bitterly hate the man who by evil arts should cut short, by several years, your life ?

Ph. I'd rather be the one to snatch life from him.

Ne. But I deem those far worse and more pernicious who voluntarily render their own lives shorter.

Ph. I agree to that, if indeed such are to be found.

Ne. If such there are ! Nay, all of your kind do the same.

Ph. Come, come, that's pretty strong.

Ne. It's true. So judge of yourself whether or not Pliny has spoken justly when he says :

“All life is a night of waking.” He lives most who employs the greatest part of his time in study. For sleep is a kind of death; wherefore the poets feign it to come from the infernal shades, and it is called by Homer Death’s own brother. Those who sleep can scarcely be numbered either amongst the living or the dead; yet rather, of the two, amongst the dead.

Ph. I am quite of your opinion.

Ne. Now tell me truly how much of life do those cut off who every day lose three or four hours in sleep.

Ph. Truly, a great portion.

Ne. Would you not reckon as a god an alchemist who should be able to add ten years to the sum of your life, and when you are advanced in years restore to you the vigor of youth?

Ph. Why should I not?

Ne. And this divine blessing you are able to confer upon yourself.

Ph. How so ?

Ne. Because the morning of the day is youth. Youth flourishes up to mid-day; then manhood; to which the evening, as old age, succeeds; thus falls the evening, the day's death. Frugality is a handsome income, and never more than here. Has he not made a great profit, then, who has avoided the loss of the greatest and best part of his life ?

Ph. You proclaim the truth.

Ne. How insufferably shameless, then, must he seem who lays the blame upon nature, saying she bounds the life of man in narrow limits, when they themselves from that which is given voluntarily cut off so great a part. Life is long enough for him who will but use it prudently. Nor has he made small progress who knows how to do everything in season. After the mid-day meal we are scarce half men; when the body, laden with food, burdens the mind; nor is it safe to summon up to higher things the spirits from the stomach's

kitchen, where they are employed in the business of concoction. After dinner much less. But in the morning hours a man is all a man, when the body is fit for all employments; when the spirit is alert, and all the organs of the body serene and tranquil, whilst it breathes a part of the divine aether, as one has said, and has a taste of whence it came, and is borne on to noble deeds.

Ph. Indeed, you declaim with much elegance.

Ne. Agamemnon, in Homer, tells us: "'Tis unbecoming a man of wisdom to sleep the whole night." How much greater, then, the fault to spend so much of the day in sleep?

Ph. True, but he speaks of a counsellor. I am no leader of an army.

Ne. If there is anything dearer to you than yourself, don't let this sentiment of Homer move you. A worker in metal rises before the dawn in the hope of some small gain. Has not the love of wisdom power to rouse

and stir us up, that we may at least hear the sun calling us forth to profit inestimable? Physicians rarely give physic except in the early morning. They know the golden hours in which they may assist the body, and shall we not know them, too, those hours in which we may enrich and heal the mind? If these things have little weight with you, hear how, according to Solomon, this heavenly wisdom speaks. "They who watch for me at early morn shall find me." So in the mystic Psalms what praise and commendation is there of the morning time! In the morning the Prophet extolls the mercy of the Lord; in the morning his voice is heard; in the morning his prayers come before God. According to Luke, the evangelist, the people, seeking from the Lord cure and instruction, flocked together to him early in the morning. Why do you sigh, Philypnus?

Ph. I can scarce refrain from weeping when I consider what a waste I have made of my life.

Ne. It is vain to torment yourself about those things which cannot be recalled, but may nevertheless be repaired in the time to come. Apply yourself to this, rather than vainly to deplore what is past, whereby you lose some part of the future.

Ph. You advise well, but my daily habit has me already in its power.

Ne. Nonsense; one nail drives out another, and habit is overcome by habit.

Ph. But it is difficult to forego those things to which we have been long accustomed.

Ne. At the start, I grant; but a different habit first lessens the difficulty, then changes it into the highest pleasure, so that you will not be sorry to have undergone a short discipline.

Ph. I fear it will never succeed.

Ne. If you were seventy years of age, I should not attempt to draw you from your wonted course of life; but, if I guess aright, you are scarce sixteen, and what is there that

your age is not able to overcome, if there be but a willing mind ?

Ph. I will attempt it, and I will strive that from a Philypnus I shall become a Philologus; from a lover of sleep, a lover of learning.

Ne. If you do this, my Philypnus, I am quite sure that after a few days you will congratulate yourself, and give me thanks, who advised you.

THE FALSE KNIGHT.

HARPALUS AND NESTOR.

Harpalus. Can you help me out with your advice? If you can, you will find that I am neither forgetful nor ungrateful.

Nestor. I'll make haste that you shall be what you wish to be.

Har. But it is not in our power to be born noblemen.

Nes. If you are not one, strive by virtuous actions that your nobility may derive its origin from yourself.

Har. That's a long way about.

Nes. Caesar will sell it to you for a small sum.

Har. But nobility that is purchased with money is ridiculed by the vulgar.

Nes. Since nothing is more ridiculous than a purchased title of nobility, why are you so eager for the name of knight?

Har. There are reasons, and no slight ones either, which I shall not hesitate to confide to you, if you will but put me in the way of making myself honorable in the opinion of the vulgar.

Nes. The name without the thing?

Har. Not having the substance, I would still have the reputation of it. But, come, Nestor, give me your advice, and when you have my reasons, you will say it is worth the while.

Nes. Well, since you will have it, I'll tell you. In the first place betake yourself far from home.

Har. I shall remember.

Nes. Then work yourself into the acquaintance of young men of quality.

Har. I understand.

Nes. First of all, by this means, the idea will arise that you are like the company you keep.

Har. It will indeed.

Nes. See that you have nothing about you that is vulgar.

Har. How do you mean?

Nes. I mean your clothes, that they be made not of wool, but of silk, or, if this be beyond your cloth, rather of fustian or of canvas than of cloth.

Har. You are right.

Nes. And take care not to wear anything that is whole, but slash your hat and your doublet, your hose and your shoes, and your nails, too, if you can. Never talk of a thing that is common. If any traveller come out of Spain, inquire of him how the Emperor and the Pope are getting along, how your cousin the Count of Nassau is doing, and all the rest of the old acquaintances.

Har. I'll do it.

Nes. Wear a seal ring upon your finger.

Har. If my pocket will stand it.

Nes. O, for a little you can get a brass ring,

gilded, with false stones. Then you must have your coat of arms upon it too.

Har. What bearing would you have me choose?

Nes. Why, if you like, two milk pails and a pot of ale.

Har. You are joking. Tell me seriously.

Nes. Were you ever in a battle?

Har. I never saw one.

Nes. But I believe you have beheaded the farmer's geese and capons.

Har. Ay, many a time, and manfully too.

Nes. Why, then, let your coat of arms be: three goose heads, *or*, and a meat axe, *argent*.

Har. What must the field be?

Nes. What should it be but *gules*; a monument of blood, plentifully shed.

Har. Ay, why not; for the blood of a goose is as red as the blood of a man. But go on, I beg of you.

Nes. Have this coat of arms carefully hung over the gate of every inn where you are lodging.

Har. What shall be added to the helm?

Nes. A good suggestion. Make it with a mouth slit from ear to ear.

Har. What's that for?

Nes. First, to give you air; and, then, it may suit your dress. But what must the crest be?

Har. That's what I want to know.

Nes. A dog's head, with drooping ears.

Har. That's very common.

Nes. Then add two horns to it. That's not common.

Har. I like that very well. But what beasts shall I have for supporters?

Nes. Why, as for bucks, and dogs, and dragons and griffins, they have been taken up already by princes. Suppose you put two harpies there.

Har. Nothing could be better.

Nes. Then your title. In the first place you must be sure not to suffer yourself to be called Harpalus Comensis, but Harpalus a

Como; the latter is the manner of the nobility, the former of low theologians.

Har. Yes, I recollect.

Nes. Is there anything you can call yourself lord of ?

Har. No, not so much as a pig-stye.

Nes. Were you born in any famous city ?

Har. No, in a sorry village; for a man must not lie when he is seeking counsel.

Nes. True; but is there no mountain near that village ?

Har. Yes.

Nes. And is there any rock near that ?

Har. Yes, a very steep one.

Nes. Why, then you shall be Harpalus, Knight of the Golden Rock.

Har. But it is the custom of great men, I have noticed, to have their peculiar mottoes; as Maximilian had "Keep within bounds." Philip, "He that will," and Charles, "Further yet;" some one thing, some another.

Nes. Well, suppose you take: "Let no stone be unturned?"

Har. You could suggest nothing more fitting.

Nes. Now, in order that the general estimate of you may be confirmed, you must counterfeit letters sent you from this and that great personage, in which you must frequently be styled, "Illustrious Knight," and there mention must be made of great affairs, as of estates, castles, many thousands of florins, great offices, and rich matches, and you must contrive that these letters shall fall into people's hands as being dropped by chance, or forgotten.

Har. That will be very easy for me, because I have a knowledge of letters, and by much practice have acquired such skill that I can easily counterfeit any man's hand.

Nes. Good! Now, either sew them into your garment, or leave them in your pocket, so that when you send your clothes to your tailor to mend, he may find them. He will make no secret of it, and when it comes to your knowledge, assume an air of displeasure

and vexation, as if you were much annoyed at the occurrence.

Har. I have practiced that so long that I can change my countenance as easily as my dress.

Nes. By this means the artifice will not be suspected, and the matter will be rapidly noised abroad.

Har. I'll take care to look after that.

Nes. Then you must furnish yourself with companions, and with servants as well, who shall behave deferentially before you, and call you "My lord" before everybody. This will not cost you anything. There are a great many young fellows who will be glad to play this part for nothing; and, moreover, this country is running over with bookish youths who are strangely infected with the desire—I will not say the itch—of writing, and there are hungry printers who shrink at nothing, if there be any hope of gain. You must bribe some of these to give you in their pamphlets the title of a nobleman, of your country, and

let it be repeated, every now and then, in capital letters. Thus they will celebrate you as a nobleman from Bohemia, and the pamphlets secure a wider and more rapid circulation than tongues or prattling servants.

Har. This method commends itself, but the servants will have to be maintained.

Nes. That is true; but you must not keep idle servants that have no hands. Such will be unprofitable. You must send them hither and thither, and they will always pick up something. There will be frequent opportunities for doing this, as you well know.

Har. Say no more. I know.

Nes. Then there are other arts.

Har. Pray let me hear them.

Nes. Unless you are a good dicer, a skillful card player, an abandoned libertine, a stout drinker, a daring spendthrift, and a borrower and consumer of other people's money, and have got the French pox to boot, scarce anybody will believe you to be a knight.

Har. In these matters I have long since become expert. But where shall I get the money?

Nes. Hold, I was coming to that. Have you a patrimony?

Har. A very small one.

Nes. After the notion of your nobility has been generally confirmed, you will easily find fools that will give you credit. Some will be ashamed and others afraid to deny you, and there are a thousand ways to delude creditors.

Har. I am not unacquainted with them. But they will be very pressing when they find nothing coming but words.

Nes. There is no easier way to command than by having many creditors.

Har. How so?

Nes. First of all, your creditor gives you as much attention as if he were the person obliged, and is afraid lest he should give any occasion of losing his money. No man has his servants so much in awe as a debtor his

creditor, and if you ever pay them anything, it is more highly appreciated than if you made them a present of it.

Har. I have found it so.

Nes. But you must take care not to deal with little people, for they make great tragedies over small matters. Those who have more capital are more easily managed. Modesty restrains them, hope leads them on, and fear deters them; for they know what knights are capable of. Last of all, when you are head over heels in debt, then, upon one pretext or another, migrate, first to one place, then to another. Nor is there any reason to be ashamed, for nobody is more deeply in debt than great princes. If any common fellow presses you, pretend you are offended at his impudence. Make a small payment now and then, but not the whole, nor to all your creditors. You must always take care that no one suspects you have an empty pocket. Make a brave show of your money.

Har. But how can a man make a show when he has nothing?

Nes. If a friend has placed anything in your care, show it as your own, but do it artfully, so that it may seem to be done by chance. It is also a good plan to borrow money and show it, even though you pay it back immediately. Pull a couple of florins, which you have carefully placed by themselves, out of your pocket from a whole pocketfull of coppers. You may imagine the effect.

Har. Yes, I understand that, but at last I must of necessity sink under my debts.

Nes. You know what knights can do with us.

Har. What they please, and no redress.

Nes. Keep servants who are not idle, or perhaps some of your kindred who must be kept anyway. Some merchant will come along whom they may rob on the way; they will find something in taverns, or in houses, or in boats, that is left unguarded. Do you

see? They will remember that a man's fingers were not given him for nothing.

Har. If this could be done with safety.

Nes. You must take care to keep them in handsome liveries, and send them frequently with forged letters to distinguished men. If they steal anything, even if they are suspected, nobody will dare to charge them with it for fear of the knight, their master. If they chance to take a booty by force, it will be called spoils of war.

Har. That is brave counsel.

Nes. This maxim of knighthood is always to be sustained: That it is lawful for a knight on the road to ease a common traveller of his money; for what can be more disgraceful than for a common tradesman to have plenty of money, and a knight at the same time to be in need of it to spend upon harlots and dice? Go as much as you can into the company of great men, even though you inflict yourself upon them; and that you may not be abashed at

anything, your forehead must be brazen, especially in the presence of your host. It will be best for you to live in some frequented place, as at the baths, and at the most frequented inns.

Har. I had that in mind.

Nes. In such places fortune will oftentimes throw something in your way.

Har. How, I beseech you?

Nes. Say, some one drops a purse; another leaves the key in the door of his wardrobe. You grasp my meaning?

Har. But—

Nes. What are you afraid of? Who will dare to suspect a person of such refinement, who talks so nobly, the Knight of the Golden Rock? And suppose there should be some abandoned fellow audacious enough to point you out? In the meantime suspicion will have been cast upon some other of the guests that went away the day before. The servants will be embroiled with the landlord; you will

hold yourself perfectly tranquil and indifferent. If this accident has happened to a man of modesty, or of brains, he will pass it over without making words about it, lest, in addition to his loss, he be covered with shame for taking no better care of his money.

Har. That is very probable, for I suppose you know the Count of the White Vulture ?

Nes. Why shouldn't I ?

Har. Well, I heard of a certain Spaniard, a handsome, genteel fellow, that put up with him. He carried away a matter of six hundred florins, nor did the Count dare to lodge complaint against him ; such was the bearing of the man.

Nes. You have a precedent, then. You may now and then send out one of your servants in battle array. He will rifle churches and monasteries, and return laden with the spoils of war.

Har. This is the safest plan of all.

Nes. There is yet another way of getting money.

Har. Pray let me hear it.

Nes. Pick a quarrel with those that have a good deal of money, particularly with monks or priests, who are looked upon with much dislike now-a-days. One of them has laughed at you, or spit upon your escutcheon; another has spoken dishonorably of you, and still another has written something that might be tortured into calumny. Through your heralds declare an irreconcilable feud. Scatter abroad terrible threats of murder and destruction. They will be terrified, and come to you to make it up. Then see that you set a sufficient price upon your dignity; that is to say, you must demand the unreasonable in order to get what is reasonable. If you make a demand of three thousand florins, they will be ashamed to offer you less than two hundred.

Har. And I will threaten others with the law.

Nes. That is more like an informer, but yet it may help in some cases. But hark you, Harpalus, I had almost forgotten what I should

have mentioned at the start. Some girl with a good dowry is to be drawn into the noose of matrimony. You have a certain charm about you; you are young; you are rather good-looking; you're a fine braggart, and you smile well. Give it out that you are called away to some great office in the court of the Emperor. Girls are fond of marrying satraps.

Har. I know some that have made their fortunes in this way. But what if the cheat should be discovered, and all my creditors should fall upon me at once? Then I, the sham knight, shall become a laughing stock, for they hate this sort of thing worse than if you should rob a church.

Nes. Why, in that case, you must remember to put on a brazen face, and that impudence never passed so readily for wisdom as it does in these days. You must invent something for an excuse, and you will always find some easy people who will believe your story, and some so civil that they will not betray

your trick if they have discovered it. Last of all, if you can do nothing else, you must take refuge somewhere, either in the army or in some disturbance, for, as the sea hides all the evils of men, so is war the cesspool of all rascality, and now-a-days he that has not been trained up in the school of rascality is not looked upon as fit to be a commander. This must be your last card, when all else shall have failed you, and you must turn every stone before you come to it. Take care that you are not ruined by going security for others. Shun little towns that a man can't sneeze in, but everybody knows it; in great and populous cities there is more liberty, unless it be in such a place as Marseilles. Quietly find out what people are saying about you, and when you hear the people begin to talk in this manner: "What is his business, and why does he tarry here all these years?" "Why doesn't he go home?" "How can he neglect his castles?" "Who are his ancestors, and where does he get the

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means for his extravagance ?"—this kind of talk, I say, when it begins to spread abroad, then it is time for you to think of moving. But let your retreat be that of the lion, and not the hare. Pretend you are called away to the court of the Emperor on important business, and that you will return shortly at the head of an army. Those that have anything they are not willing to lose will not dare to say a word against you when you are gone. But above all I advise you to have a care of that peevish, malicious set of men who are called poets. If anything displeases them, they will envenom their writings, and the venom of them will of a sudden be spread all through the world.

Har. Strike me dead if I am not wonderfully pleased with your counsel, and I shall make it my business to let you see that you have hit upon a worthy pupil and a young man that is not ungrateful. The first good horse I get into my pasture that is equal to your deserts, I will send you as a gift.

Nes. Well, it only remains for you to carry out your promise. But why is it that you persist in holding such an unflattering opinion of the nobility ?

Har. For no other reason except that they do what they please and go unpunished. And do you think this a matter of little importance ?

Nes. If the worst come, death is a debt that must be paid to nature, even if you have lived a Carthusian; and it is an easier death to be broken on the wheel than to die of the stone, the gout, or the palsy, for it is like a soldier to believe that after death nothing remains of a man but his carcass.

Har. I, too, am of that opinion.

CHARON.

CHARON. ALASTOR.

Charon. Whither are you going with such unbridled haste, Alastor?

Alastor. O, Charon, you have come in the nick of time. I was coming to you.

Ch. Well, what's the news?

Al. I bring a message to you and to Proserpine that is most joyful.

Ch. Out with it then and lighten your burden.

Al. The Furies have been no less diligent than successful in gaining their point; there is not a foot of ground on earth which they have not infected with their hellish calamities, seditions, wars, robberies and plagues, so that they have grown quite bald, having shed all their snakes and exhausted all their venom.

Now they are rambling about in search of such vipers and asps as they may find, for they are as bald as an egg, without a single hair on their heads, nor a drop more of venom in their breasts. But do you get your boat and oars ready; you will have such a throng of ghosts coming to you before long that I fear you will not be able to carry them all over by yourself.

Ch. I could have told you that ?

Al. How came you to know it ?

Ch. Ossa brought me that news more than two days ago.

Al. Nothing is more swift than that goddess. But why are you loitering here away from your boat ?

Ch. I came here on business to get me a good strong trireme. My boat is so rotten and leaky with age that it will not carry such a burden, if it is true what Ossa has told me. But, indeed, what matters it about Ossa; the need is evident, for I have suffered shipwreck already.

Al. Indeed, you are all dripping. I fancied you were just come out of a bath.

Ch. No, I swam out of the Stygian pool.

Al. Where did you leave the ghosts ?

Ch. They are swimming among the frogs.

Al. But what was it that Ossa told you ?

(Ch. That the three monarchs of the world were bent upon one other's destruction with a mortal hatred, and that no part of Christendom was free from the madness of war. For these three have drawn all the rest with them into the whirlpool of battle. They are all so high spirited that no one of them will yield to the other. Nor are the Danes, the Poles, the Scots nor the Turks at peace, but they are preparing dreadful things. The plague rages everywhere, in Spain, Britain, Italy and France. Add to this that a new infection is sprung out of the variety of opinions, which has so corrupted the minds of all people that there is no such thing as sincere friendship anywhere, but brother is at enmity with

brother, and husband and wife cannot any longer agree. So that there is hope that there will soon arise a glorious destruction of mankind if these controversies, which are now carried on with the tongue and the pen, once come to blows.

Al. All that report has told you is quite true, for I have with these eyes seen all this and more, having been a constant companion and ally of the Furies, who have never at any time shown themselves more worthy of their name.

Ch. But there is danger lest some spirit should arise who might of a sudden exhort them to peace. Men's minds are variable, and I have heard that among the living there is one Polygraphus, who is continually, by his writing, inveighing against wars and urging peace.

Al. He has a long time been talking to deaf ears. He once wrote a *Hue and Cry* after *Peace Banished and Driven Away*, and after

that an Epitaph upon Peace Defunct; but, then, on the other hand, there are others who advance our cause no less than do the Furies themselves.

Ch. Who are they?

Al. They are a certain kind of animals in black and white garments, ash-colored gowns, and various dresses. They are always hovering about the courts of princes, and constantly instilling into their ears the love of war, exhorting the nobility and common people to it, haranguing them in their sermons, that it is a just, holy and religious war. And that which would still more arouse your admiration of these men is the fact that they cry it on both sides. In France they preach that God is on the French side, and that they that have God for their champion can never be overcome. In England and in Spain the cry is that the war is not the king's, but God's; wherefore, if they do but fight like men, victory is sure, and that if anyone should chance to fall in

battle, he will not die, but fly directly up into heaven, arms and all.

Ch. And all this is believed ?

Al. What cannot a hypocritical religion do ? Add to this youth, inexperience, thirst for glory, hatred, inclination and the natural bent of mind. It is an easy matter to impose upon such, not more difficult than to overthrow a wagon already on the point of toppling.

Ch. I would do these animals a good turn with all my heart.

Al. Spread a bounteous banquet. Nothing will please them so much.

Ch. What ? Of mallows, lupins and leeks ? For you know we have no other provision down here.

Al. Nay, of partridges, capons and pheasants, if you would have them look upon you as a good caterer.

Ch. What is it that moves these people to be so hot for war ? What do they gain by it ?

Al. They get more from those who die than

from those who live. There are last wills and testaments, funeral obsequies, bulls, and a great many other profits not to be despised. Finally, they prefer to live in a camp rather than in their cells, War breeds a great many bishops, who were not thought of any consequence in time of peace.)

Ch. Well, they know their business.

Al. But what need is there of a trireme?

Ch. No need at all, if I had a mind to be wrecked again in the Stygian lake.

Al. Was that because you had such a crowd?

Ch. Yes.

Al. But you carry shades, not bodies. What weight have shades?

Ch. Let them be water spiders, yet there may be enough of them to overload a boat, and then, you know, my boat is but a shadow-boat as well.

Al. But I remember, once upon a time, when you had a great company, so many that your boat would not hold them, I saw

three thousand hanging to your rudder, and you were not conscious of the weight at all.

Ch. I confess there are ghosts of that sort. They are such as pass slowly out of the body, attenuated with consumption or with hectic fevers. But those that are torn suddenly out of stout bodies bring a great deal of the corporeal substance along with them, such as are sent hither by apoplexies, pestilences, and especially by war.

Al. I don't think the French or Spaniards bring much weight along with them.

Ch. Much less than the others, but for all that their ghosts are not as light as feathers, either. As for the well-fed Englishmen and Germans, they come in such condition that I recently was in danger of going to the bottom with only ten aboard, and had I not thrown overboard some of my cargo, I should have been lost, boat, passengers, passage money, and all.

Al. You certainly were in great danger.

Ch. What shall I do, then, in your opinion, when so many fat lords, hectors and bullies come down to us?

* Al. As for those that die in a just war, I suppose none of them will come to you, for they say they fly straight up into heaven.

Ch. I can't say where they fly to, but this one thing I do know: as often as there is a war, there come to me so many wounded and cripples that I wonder there should be any one left above ground; and they come weighted down, not only with eating and drinking, but with bulls, benefices, and a great many other things.

Al. They don't bring these things with them, do they? They come naked to you.

Ch. True, but on their arrival they bring the dreams of all these things.

Al. Are dreams so heavy then?

Ch. They load down my boat. Load it down, did I say? Nay, they have sunk it before now. Then do you think all the half-pence weigh nothing?

Al. Yes, I believe they do, if they bring brass ones.

Ch. Therefore I have made up my mind to look out for a vessel that shall be equal to my cargo.

Al. You're a lucky fellow.

Ch. Why so?

Al. Because you'll get rich at once.

Ch. What, out of a multitude of ghosts?

Al. To be sure.

Ch. Ay, if they did but bring their wealth along with them. But now they sit in my boat, bewailing the kingdoms and dignities and abbacies, and the innumerable talents of gold they have left behind, and bring me nothing but a poor half-penny. All I have been scraping together for these three thousand years will go for the purchase of a new boat.

Al. You have to spend money in order to make it.

Ch. But the people in the world have better trading, I am told. If fortune favors them they can get rich in three years' time.

Al. Ay, and sometimes turn bankrupts too. Your gain is less, but more certain.

Ch. I can't tell how certain it is. If any deity should start up, and make peace amongst the princes, this chance of mine would be knocked in the head at once.

Al. As for that, I can assure you, you may sleep soundly. You have no reason to fear a peace for these ten years. The pope is the only man who is persuading them to come to an agreement amongst themselves, but he is wasting his breath. The cities murmur at their burden of ills, and some there are, I can't say who, that whisper about it is an unreasonable thing that the whole world should be turned upside down for the private quarrels and ambitions of two or three persons. But, take my word for it, the Furies will get the better of these wise counsels, whatever they may be. But what need is there for you to seek aid of mortals? Haven't we workmen enough amongst ourselves? We have Vulcan, have we not?

Ch. Surely, if I wanted a boat of brass.

Al. At least some one might be sent for.

Ch. I might do that, but I lack materials.

Al. What say you? Are there no woods in this country?

Ch. All the woods that were in the Elysian Fields are used up.

Al. How is that?

Ch. In burning the ghosts of heretics, so that, of late, we have been obliged to dig for coal in the bowels of the earth.

Al. What, could not the ghosts be punished at a less expense than that?

Ch. Rhadamanthus ruled it so.

Al. If this be so, when you have got your boat, where will you get oars?

Ch. It is my business to steer. Let the ghosts row themselves if they want to get over.

Al. But some of them have never learned to hold an oar.

Ch. There are no idlers aboard my craft.

Both kings and cardinals row with me. Every man takes his turn, the poorest peasant as well, whether they have learned to row or not.

Al. Well, use your wits, and get a trireme as cheap as you can. I won't detain you any longer. I'll away to hell with my good news. But, O Charon, I say!

Ch. What's the matter?

Al. Make haste, and get back as soon as you can, or the crowd will overwhelm you.

Ch. Nay, you'll find at least two hundred thousand men on the bank already, besides those that are paddling in the pool. I'll make what haste I can, and do you tell them I'll be there presently.

THE ALCHEMIST.

PHILECOUS. LALUS.

Philecous. What is up that Lalus is smiling to himself, so that he almost bursts into a roar, making every now and then the sign of the cross? I'll interrupt his felicity. Good-day, my dear Lalus; you seem to be very happy.

Lalus. But I shall be much happier when I have made you a partaker of my joy.

Phi. Prithee, then, make me happy as soon as you can.

La. Do you know Balbinus?

Phi. The learned old gentleman who enjoys such a fine reputation?

La. The same; but no mortal man is wise at all times, or is without his weak side. This man, with all his good qualities, and they are

many, is endowed with some blemishes. He has for a long time been bewitched with the art called Alchemy.

Phi. Do not speak of it as a trifle, but as a dangerous disease.

La. However that may be, and notwithstanding he has been so often deceived by this sort of people, he has lately suffered himself to be imposed upon again.

Phi. In what manner?

La. A certain priest went to him, saluted him with great respect, and accosted him in this manner: "Most learned Balbinus, perhaps you will wonder that I, a stranger, should thus interrupt you, who are, as I know, always deeply occupied with the most sacred studies." Balbinus gave him a nod, as was his custom, for he is wonderfully sparing of his words.

Phi. That is an evidence of prudence.

La. But the other, as the wiser of the two, proceeds: "You will forgive my importunity when you learn the reason of my coming to

you.” “Tell me, then,” says Balbinus, “but in as few words as possible.” “I will,” says he, “as briefly as I am able. You know, most learned of men, that the fates of mortals are various, and I cannot tell whether I should class myself in the number of the happy or of the miserable. When I contemplate my fate on the one side, I account myself most happy; but if on the other side, no one is more miserable.” Balbinus urged him to make the matter as brief as possible. “I will have done immediately, most learned Balbinus,” said he, “and it will be the more easy for me in the presence of a man who understands the whole affair so well, that no man understands it better.”

Phi. You are sketching me an orator rather than an alchemist.

La. You shall hear the alchemist by and by. “This good fortune,” says he, “I have had from a child, that I learned that most desirable of arts, alchemy, the very marrow, I call it, of

all philosophy.” At the very mention of alchemy, Balbinus raised himself a little with an involuntary motion, then with a deep sigh bade him proceed. The priest continued: “But miserable man that I am,” said he, “by not falling into the right way!” When Balbinus asked him what way he referred to, he replied: “Good sir, you know (for what escapes Balbinus, a man of such erudition?) that there are two ways in this art: one, which is called Longation; and the other, which is called Curtation. Through my bad fate I have fallen upon Longation.” When Balbinus asked him what was the difference between the ways, he replied: “It would be impudent in me to mention this to a man to whom, as I am very well aware, all things are so well known that nobody knows them better. Therefore I come as a suppliant before you, that you may take pity upon me, and deign to impart to me that most happy way of Curtation. And the fact that you are so expert in this art will make it

a much simpler task to impart it to me. Do not conceal so great a gift from your poor brother, who is ready to die with grief, and may Jesus Christ ever enrich you with more sublime endowments." When he would make no end of his entreaties, Balbinus was obliged to confess that he was utterly ignorant of the whole matter of Longation and Curtation, and bade him explain the meaning of the terms. Then the priest began: "Although, sir, I am aware that I am speaking to a person better skilled than myself, yet since you command me, I will do as you wish. Those that have spent their whole lives in this divine art change the species of things in two ways: one shorter, but full of danger; the other longer, but safer. I count myself unhappy that I have learned in that way which is not adapted to my disposition; nor have I been able, up to this time, to find anybody who would show me that other way, which I am so desirous of learning. But at last God put it into my

mind to apply to you, a man not less pious than learned. Your learning enables you to easily grant what I seek, and your piety will dispose you to help a Christian brother, whose salvation is in your hands." To make the matter short, long before the old fox, with talk of this kind, had cleared himself of all suspicion of a trick, and had established the belief that he understood one way perfectly well, Balbinus' mind was itching with curiosity. At last, when he could hold out no longer, he cried: "Away with your methods of Curtation, of which I have never before heard even the name, so far am I from understanding it. Tell me, sincerely, do you thoroughly understand Longation?" "Pooh!" replied the priest, "perfectly well. But I don't like the tediousness of it." Then Balbinus asked him how much time it would require. "Too much," replied the priest, "almost a whole year; but in the meantime it is the safest way." "Never mind about that," said Balbinus, "if

it should take two years, if only you can depend upon your art.' To shorten the story, they came to an agreement, that the business should be set on foot secretly in Balbinus' house upon this condition: the priest was to find the art and Balbinus the money, and the profit was to be equally divided between them, although the imposter modestly offered that Balbinus should have the whole gain. They took an oath of secrecy after the manner of those who are initiated into the mystic rites, and money was paid down for the artist to buy pots, glasses, coal, and other necessary things for furnishing the laboratory. This money our alchemist squandered agreeably upon harlots, dice and drinking.

Phi. That is one way, however, of changing the species of things.

La. When Balbinus pressed him to take vigorously hold of the matter, he replied: "Don't you know that 'well begun is half done?' It is of the first importance to have

the materials well prepared." At last he began to set up the furnace, and here again was need for more gold, to be used as a bait for future gold; for as fish are not caught without bait, so alchemists must put gold in before they can take gold out. In the meantime Balbinus was wholly absorbed in his computations, for he reckoned thus: If one ounce makes fifteen ounces, what will be the product of two thousand ounces? That was the sum he had made up his mind to spend. When the alchemist had spent the money entrusted to him and two months' time, pretending to be wonderfully busy about the bellows and the coals, Balbinus inquired of him how the work was going on. At first he made no answer, but upon Balbinus' urging he at length replied: "As all important matters go, the greatest difficulty is to make a beginning." A mistake had been made in buying the coals; he had bought oak coals, and it was necessary to have fir or hazel.

There was a hundred florins gone, nor did he on this account betake himself less eagerly to the dice. The money was given, and new coals were bought, and the business begun again with renewed zeal, just as in war soldiers, if anything happens in the way of disaster, make it up in bravery. When the laboratory had been kept hot for some months, and the golden fruit was expected, and there was not a grain of gold in the vessels (for the alchemist had squandered all that), another pretence was found: that the glasses they had been using were not rightly tempered. For just as a Mercury cannot be cut out of every log, even so gold cannot be made in every kind of glass; and the more money that was spent, the more unwilling was Balbinus to give it up.

Phi. So it is with gamesters, as if it were not better to lose some than all.

La. Very true. The alchemist swore he was never so deceived since he was born, but

now that this error had been detected, the rest was sure, and he hoped to make up that loss with large interest. The glasses were changed, and the laboratory refurnished for the third time. Then the operator warned his patron that the work would go on more successfully if he would send a present of a few florins to the Virgin Mother who is worshipped by the dwellers on the coast, for the art was a holy one, and not likely to prosper without the favor of the saints. Balbinus liked this advice exceedingly, being a very pious man, who never let a day pass without performing some act of devotion. The alchemist set out, therefore, upon this pilgrimage, but spent the votive offering in a bawdy-house in the next town. Then he came back, and told Balbinus that he had great hopes the business would turn out according to their desires, since the Holy Virgin seemed so to favor his offerings. When he had labored for a long time, and not one grain of gold appear-

ing, Balbinus expostulated with him, he answered that nothing like this had ever happened to him in all his life, as often as he had practiced the art, nor could he imagine what was the matter. After they had studied over the matter a long time, it occurred to Balbinus that perhaps some day he had omitted hearing the mass, or saying his prayers, for he was certain that nothing would succeed if these were omitted. "You have hit the nail upon the head," replied the imposter; "I, too, wretch that I am, have been guilty of the same crime once or twice through forgetfulness, and once of late, rising from the table, after a long dinner, I forgot to repeat the Salutation of the Virgin." "Why, then," said Balbinus, "it is no wonder that a thing of this moment succeeds no better." The rascal undertook to perform twelve services for two that he had omitted, and to repay ten Salutations for the one. When money every now and then failed this extravagant alchemist,

and he could find no pretext for asking for more, he finally hit upon this scheme. He came home with the air of one terrified to death, and in a mournful tone cried out: "Alas, Balbinus! I am lost, totally lost! I am in danger of my life!" Balbinus was stupefied, and sought to learn the cause of the disaster. "The people of the court," replied the priest, "have gotten wind of what we are about, and I expect nothing else but to be carried to prison immediately." At this Balbinus turned pale in earnest, for you know it is a capital crime with us for any man to practice alchemy without permission of the prince. "Not," continued the priest, "that I fear death for myself. Would that were the worst thing that could happen! I fear something more cruel." Being asked what that might be, he replied: "I shall be dragged off to some castle, and there forced to work all my days for those I have no mind to serve. Is there any death that would not be preferred to such

a life ?” The matter was carefully considered, and Balbinus, who was well versed in the art of rhetoric, examined every possibility if this mischief might not in some way be averted. “Can’t you deny the crime ?” he suggested. “Impossible,” replied the priest. “The matter is known among the people of the court, and they have proof which cannot be set aside; nor is it possible to avert the result, for the law is clear.” When many things had been proposed, and nothing seemed to afford a certainty of relief, the alchemist, who was in need of ready money, said, “Balbinus, we waste our strength in vain counsels, when the matter demands an immediate remedy. Already I think I hear them coming to carry me away to my cruel fate.” Finally, seeing that Balbinus did not catch the point, he added: “I am as much at a loss as you, nor do I see any way left, but to die like a man, unless you approve of what I am going to propose, which would be more profitable than

honorable, were not necessity a stern master. You know that these men are hungry after money, wherefore they may the more easily be bribed to secrecy. Although it is indeed hard to give these rascals good money to throw away, but as the case now stands, I see no better way." Balbinus was of the same opinion, and counted out thirty gold pieces to secure their silence.

Phi. You make Balbinas out to be wonderfully liberal.

La. Nay, in an honest cause, you would sooner have gotten his teeth out of his head than his money. Well, the alchemist was provided for, who was in no danger but that of wanting money for his mistress.

Phi. I wonder Balbinus had no suspicion all this while.

La. This is the only thing he lacks shrewdness in; he is sharp enough at anything else. Now the furnace was put to work again with new money, but first a short prayer was made

to the Virgin to prosper their undertaking. By this time a whole year had been spent, first with one obstacle, then with another, so that all the expense and labor was lost. In the meantime a most ridiculous thing occurred.

Phi. What was that ?

La. The alchemist had an intrigue with the lady of a certain courtier. The husband beginning to be jealous, began to watch for the man, and, finally, having been informed that the priest was in his wife's bed-chamber, he came home unexpected, and knocked at the door.

Phi. What did he intend to do with him ?

La. What ? Why, nothing very agreeable; either kill or mutilate him. When the husband, being short of patience, threatened to break down the door if his wife did not open it, they were in bodily fear within, and looked about for some means of escape. Circumstances suggesting nothing better, the alchemist pulled off his coat and threw himself out

of a narrow window, not without both danger and injury to himself, and so got away. Such stories as these, you know, spread rapidly. It came to the ears of Balbinus, but the artist was not unprepared for this event.

Phi. So he was caught at last.

La. Nay, he got off better here than he did out of the bed-chamber. Hear the man's invention. Balbinus said not a word to him about the matter, but showed it in his gloomy countenance that he was no stranger to the talk of the town. The alchemist knew Balbinus to be a man of piety, and in some respects, I should almost say, superstitious. Such persons are very ready to forgive a suppliant, no matter how grave his offense. Therefore the priest purposely began a talk about the progress of their business, complaining that it had not been exactly successful, not such as it had formerly been, or as he had hoped it would be, adding that he wondered greatly what might be the reason. Upon this

Balbinus, who hitherto had been sunk in silence, was readily moved. "It is not difficult to see," said he, "what the trouble is. Sins are the obstacles that stand in the way of our success, for pure works must be undertaken by pure persons." At this word the trickster fell upon his knees, beating his breast, and with a countenance and voice full of tears cried: "O, Balbinus, what you have said is true indeed. It is sin indeed that hinders us, but my sin, not yours. I am not ashamed to confess my uncleanness before you, as I would before my most holy father confessor. The frailty of my flesh o'ercame me, and Satan drew me into his snares. Miserable wretch that I am; of a priest I am become an adulterer! And yet the offering which you sent to the Virgin Mother is not wholly lost, for I had certainly perished if she had not helped me, for when the husband broke open the door, and the window was too little for me, in that moment of danger I be-

thought me of the blessed Virgin; I fell upon my knees and besought her, that if the gift had been acceptable to her, she should help me, and without delay I went to the window (for the necessity was great), and found it large enough for my escape.

Phi. Did Balbinus believe this?

La. Believe it? Yes, indeed, and forgave him, too, and admonished him religiously not to be ungrateful to the blessed Virgin. And more money was paid down upon his giving his promise that he would thenceforth carry on the business with purity.

Phi. Well, what was the end of all this?

La. The story is very long, but I will cut it short. When he had fooled his man long enough with such inventions, and wheedled him out of a considerable sum of money, a certain person happened to come along, who had known the rascal from a boy. He readily suspected that he was acting the same part with Balbinus that he had acted everywhere,

and secretly admonished Balbinus, telling him what sort of a fellow he was harboring in his house, and advised him to get rid of the rascal as soon as possible, unless he had a mind to have him rifle his coffers sometime and then run away.

Phi. Well, what did Balbinus do then? Surely he took care to have him committed to prison?

La. To prison? Nay, he gave him money for his journey, conjuring him, by all that was sacred, not to speak of what had happened. And he was wise, in my opinion, to do this, rather than to become the subject of an after-dinner joke, and run the risk of having his goods confiscated besides. For the impostor was in no danger. He knew no more of his art than an ass, and cheating is the breath of life to people of that sort. If he had charged him with theft, his cloth would have kept him from hanging, and nobody would have been willing to maintain such a fellow in prison.

Phi. I should pity Balbinus, but that he took pleasure in being swindled.

La. I must make haste to the court. At another time I'll tell you stories more ridiculous than this.

Phi. When you are at leisure, I shall be glad to hear them, and I will give you story for story.

THE FRANCISCANS OR RICH BEGGARS.

CONRAD. A BERNARDINE MONK. A PARSON.
AN INN-KEEPER AND HIS WIFE.

Conrad. Hospitality becomes a pastor.

Parson. But I am the pastor of sheep. I do not care for wolves.

Con. But perhaps you don't hate a wench quite so much. What harm have we done you that you have such a dislike of us, so that you won't so much as suffer us under your roof? We are not putting you to the expense of a supper.

Par. I'll tell you. If you should so much as discover a hen or a chicken in my house, to-morrow I should be defamed before the people from the pulpit. This is the gratitude people of your sort show for being entertained.

Con. We are not all of that stripe.

Par. Well, be what you will, I'd scarcely trust St. Peter himself if he came to me in such a garb.

Con. If that be your resolution, at least tell us where to find other lodging.

Par. There is a public inn here in town.

Con. What sign has it ?

Par. Upon a hanging board you will see a dog thrusting his head into a pot. This is what happens in the kitchen, and a wolf sits at the bar.

Con. That is a promising sign.

Par. Make your best of it.

Bernardine. What sort of a pastor is this ? We might starve for all of him.

Con. If he feeds his sheep no better than he feeds us, they cannot be very fat.

Ber. In evil times we have need of good counsel. What shall we do ?

Con. We must put modesty aside.

Ber. There's little to be gained with modesty in case of need.

Con. Very true, but St. Francis will be with us.

Ber. Let us try our fortune then.

Con. Let us not stay at the door for the host's answer, but rush directly into the stove-room, and we won't be easily put out again.

Ber. O, impudent trick !

Con. T'is better than to lie all night under the sky and freeze to death. In the meantime put modesty in your wallet, to be resumed on the morrow if it seem appropriate.

Ber. Indeed, the case requires it.

Inn-keeper. What sort of animals do I see here ?

Con. We are servants of God, and the sons of St. Francis, my good man.

Innk. I don't know what pleasure God may take in such servants, but as for me I should not care to have many of them in my house.

Con. Why so ?

Innk. Because at eating and drinking you are more than men, but for working you have

neither hands nor feet. Ha! Ha! You sons of St. Francis? You used to preach that he was a celibate, and has he got so many sons?

Con. We are children of the spirit, not of the flesh.

Innk. A very unhappy father, for your spirit is the worst part of you. Your bodies are lusty enough, and as for that, it seems to go better with you than with us, who have to support a wife and daughters.

Con. Perhaps you think that we are some of those that depart from the institutions of our founder. We observe them strictly.

Innk. Then I'll observe you too, that you do me no damage, for I have a mortal hatred of your breed.

Con. Why so, I pray.

Innk. Because you carry teeth, but no money, and such sort of guests are very unwelcome to me.

Con. But we labor for you.

Innk. Shall I show you how you labor for me?

Con. Yes, show us.

Innk. Look at that picture there, just by you, on your left. There you see a wolf preaching, and on his back a goose, thrusting her head out of his cowl. There again you see a wolf absolving a certain one at confession, but part of a sheep, hid under his gown, hangs out. There again you see an ape seated at a sick bed in a Franciscan's garb. He holds forth a cross in one hand, and has the other in the sick man's purse.

Con. We do not deny that sometimes wolves, foxes and apes are clothed with our habit; nay, we confess that oftentimes swine, dogs, horses, lions and basilisks are concealed under it, but then the same garment covers many honest men. As a garment makes nobody better, so it makes nobody worse. It is unjust to judge of a man by his clothes; if so, the garment which you sometimes wear might be accursed, because it covers many thieves, murderers, sorcerers and adulterers.

Franciscans or Rich Beggars. 141

Innk. Well I'll yield in the matter of the garb, if you'll only pay.

Con. We'll pray to God for you.

Innk. And I'll pray to God for you, and so we're even.

Con. But there are some persons you must not take money of.

Innk. How comes it you have scruples against touching money ?

Con. It is opposed to our profession.

Innk. And it is opposed to my profession to entertain guests for nothing.

Con. But our rule does not permit us to touch money.

Innk. And my rule commands me quite the contrary.

Con. What rule is yours ?

Innk. Read these verses :

Guests at this table, when your bellies are full,
Rise not hence before you have first paid your score.

Con. We'll be no expense to you.

Innk. But they that are no expense to me are no profit to me either.

Con. If you do any good office to us here, God will make it up to you abundantly.

Innk. But I cannot keep my family on these words.

Con. We'll hide ourselves in some corner of the stove-room, and be no trouble to anybody.

Innk. My stove-room will not hold such company.

Con. What, will you thrust us out of doors, perchance to be devoured by wolves this night?

Innk. Wolf won't eat wolf, nor dog eat dog.

Con. If you do thus, you will be more cruel than the Turk. Let us be what we will, we are men.

Innk. I am deaf to your songs.

Con. You indulge your body, and lie naked in a warm bed behind the stove, and will you thrust us out of doors to perish in the cold night if indeed the wolves should spare us ?

Innk. Adam lived thus in Paradise.

Con. He did so, but then he was innocent.

Innk. So am I innocent.

Con. Perhaps so, leaving off the first syllable. But take care, if you thrust us out of your paradise, lest God should not receive you into his.

Innk. Come, come, no abuse.

Wife. Prithee, my man, make some amends for all your ill deeds by this small act of kindness. Let them stay under your roof this night. They are good men, and you'll see your business will be the better for it.

Innk. Here comes the intercessor. I suspect you have arranged this thing between you. I don't like very well to hear this good character from a woman. "Good men," forsooth!

Wife. Pooh, that's not so. But think how often you have sinned with dicing, drinking and brawling. At least do this alms for your soul's sake, and don't thrust these men out of

doors. You would like to have them with you at your death bed. Often enough you harbor loafers and clowns, and will you thrust these men out of doors ?

Innk. Whence comes this petticoat-preacher into our midst ? Get you in and mind your kitchen.

Wife. Well, so I will.

Ber. The man softens, and he is putting on his shirt. I hope all will be well by and by.

Con. And the boys are laying the cloth. Lucky for us that no guests come, else we should be sent packing.

Ber. It happens very fortunately that we brought a bottle of wine from the last town we were at, and a roast leg of lamb, or else, for aught I see, he would not have given us so much as a mouthful of hay.

Con. Now the servants are seated, let us take part of the table with them, but so that we discommode nobody.

Innk. I believe I may blame it upon you

that I have not a guest this day, nor anyone beside my own family and you good-for-nothings.

Con. Well, blame it upon us, if it has not happened to you often before.

Innk. Oftener than I could wish.

Con. Don't be uneasy. Christ lives, and he will not forsake his own.

Innk. I have heard you were called evangelists, and the Evangelists forbid the carrying about of wallet and bread. But I see you have great sleeves for wallets, nor do you carry bread alone, but wine, too, and delicacies in the way of meat.

Con. Take hold with us, if you will.

Innk. My wine is swill compared with that.

Con. Eat some of the meat; there is more than enough for us.

Innk. O happy beggars! My wife has cooked nothing to-day but cabbage and a little rusty bacon.

Con. If you like, let us join our stores. It s all one to us what we eat.

Innk. Then why don't you carry with you cabbage and sour wine ?

Con. Because the people where we dined to-day forced this upon us.

Innk. Did you eat for nothing ?

Con. Yes. Nay, more, they thanked us, and when we came away they gave us these things to carry with us.

Innk. Where did you come from ?

Con. From Basel.

Innk. What ? So far !

Con. Yes.

Innk. What sort of men are you that get about thus without horses, money, servants, arms or provisions ?

Con. You see in us some survivals of the evangelical life.

Innk. It seems to me the life of vagabonds that stroll about with bags.

Con. Such vagabonds the apostles were, and such the Lord Jesus himself.

Innk. Can you tell fortunes ?

Con. No, indeed.

Innk. How do you live then ?

Con. From Him who hath promised.

Innk. Who is he ?

Con. He who said: "Take no care, but all things shall be added unto you."

Innk. He did so promise, but it was to them that seek the kingdom of God.

Con. That we do with all our might.

Innk. The apostles were famous for miracles. They healed the sick, so that it is no wonder that food was ever at hand for them; but you can do nothing of the kind.

Con. We could if we were like the apostles, and if the matter required a miracle. But miracles were only given at the time for the incredulous. There is now no need for such a thing, only for a religious life. And it is oftentimes a greater happiness to be sick than to be well, and more fortunate to die than to live.

Innk. What do you do then ?

Con. What we can, every man according

to the portion of grace conferred upon him. We comfort, we exhort, we warn, we reprove, and, when the opportunity offers, sometimes we preach, if we find pastors that are dumb. If we find no opportunity of doing good, we take care to do nobody any harm, either by our manners or with our tongue.

Innk. I wish you would preach for us to-morrow, for it is a holy day.

Con. For what saint?

Innk. St. Anthony.

Con. He was indeed a good man. But how came he to have a holy day?

Innk. I'll tell you. This town abounds in swineherds by reason of a large wood nearby, which produces plenty of acorns. The people have the idea that the care of swine is entrusted to St. Anthony, and so they worship him for fear that if they neglect him, he might get angry.

Con. Would that they might worship him in truth.

Innk. How's that ?

Con. Whosoever imitates the saints in their lives, worships them with most holiness.

Innk. To-morrow the town will resound with drinking and dancing, playing, wrangling and boxing.

Con. So the heathens once worshipped their Bacchus. But I wonder that this manner of worship does not make St. Anthony furious at these men, stupider than the swine themselves. What sort of a pastor have you ? A dumb one or a wicked one ?

Innk. What he is to others, I do not know ; but he is a very good one to me, for he drinks all day long, and nobody brings me more or better customers to my great gain. I wonder he is not here now.

Con. We have found by experience that he is not very agreeable to us.

Innk. What ! Did you go to him then ?

Con. We sought lodging at his house, but he drove us away from his threshold as if we had been wolves, and sent us hither.

Innk. Ha ! Ha ! Now I understand the matter. He would not come because he knew you were here.

Con. But is he a dumb one ?

Innk. Dumb ? There is no one more noisy in the stove-room, and in the church he roars loud enough. But I never heard him preach. But what more need I say ? You yourselves know, I take it, that he is not dumb.

Con. Is he skilled in the sacred letters ?

Innk. He says he is a very expert scholar, but what he knows of such things he has learned in the secret confession, and therefore it is not lawful to reveal it to others. You know how it is. I'll tell it to you in a word: "Like people, like priest." Each dish, as we say, gets its cover.

Con. It may be he'll not give any one liberty to preach.

Innk. Yes, he will, I'll warrant, but upon this condition: that you don't throw any hints at him, as so many of you are in the habit of doing.

Con. They have bad manners who do this. If a pastor offends in anything, I admonish him privily; the rest is the business of the bishop.

Innk. Such birds seldom fly hither. Indeed you seem to be good men yourselves; but how do you happen to wear this sort of dress? For a great many people take you to be bad men, because you are thus clad.

Con. Why so?

Innk. I cannot tell, except they find a great many of you to be so.

Con. And many again take us to be holy men, because we wear this habit. Both are in error; but they err less who take us to be good men than they that take us to be bad.

Innk. Well, let it be so. But what is the advantage of so many different dresses?

Con. What do you think?

Innk. I see no advantage at all except in processions or in war. In processions there are carried about various personages, saints, Jews

and heathen, and we know which is which by the different dresses. In war as well, a variety of dress is good, in order that every one may follow the colors of his troops, so that there may be no confusion in the ranks.

Con. That is well said. But this, too, is a military garment; one of us follows one leader, one another. But we all fight under one general, Christ. In a garment, however, there are three things to be considered.

Innk. What are they?

Con. Necessity, use and decency. Why do we eat?

Innk. That we may not die of hunger.

Con. And for the same reason we take a garment that we may not perish of the cold.

Innk. I confess it.

Con. This garment of mine is better for that than yours. It covers the back, neck and shoulders, where there is most danger. Use requires various sorts of garments: a short coat for a horseman, a long one for him who

sits still, a thin one in summer, a thick one in winter. There are some at Rome that change their clothes three times a day. In the morning they take a coat lined with fur, about noon one unlined, and towards night one that is a little thicker. Every one, however, is not provided with such a variety; therefore this garment of ours is so contrived that this one will serve for various uses.

Innk. How is that?

Con. If the north wind blows or the sun shines hot, we put on our cowl; if the heat is troublesome, we let it fall behind. If we are sitting still, we let down our garment about our heels; if we are walking, we hold or gird it up.

Innk. He was no fool, whoever he was, that contrived it.

Con. It is the chief thing in living happily, that a man should accustom himself to be content with few things. Once we begin to indulge ourselves with delicacies and dainties,

there will be no end. No one garment could be invented that would answer so many purposes.

Innk. I admit that.

Con. Now let us consider the decency of it. Pray tell me honestly, if you should put on your wife's clothes would not everybody say you had acted indecently?

Innk. They would say I was mad.

Con. And what would you say if she were to put on your clothes?

Innk. I should not say much, but I should give her a good beating.

Con. Does it then signify nothing what garment one wears?

Innk. In this case it is very important.

Con. Nor is that strange; for the laws of the pagans punished either man or woman that should wear the clothes of the other sex.

Innk. And they were right.

Con. Let us proceed. What if an old man of fourscore should dress himself like a boy of

fifteen; or, on the other hand, a young man dress himself like an old man? Would not everybody say that he ought to be beaten for it? Or if an old woman should attire herself like a young girl, or the contrary?

Innk. No doubt.

Con. In like manner, if a layman should wear a priest's habit, and a priest a layman's?

Innk. They would both act unbecomingly.

Con. What if a private man should assume the regalia of a prince, or an inferior clergyman that of a bishop? Would he act becomingly or not?

Innk. Unbecomingly.

Con. What if a citizen should dress himself like a soldier, with a feather and other distinctions of Thrasonic folly?

Innk. He would be laughed at.

Con. What if amongst soldiers an Englishman should wear a white cross in his colors, a Swiss a red one, and a Frenchman a black one?

Innk. He would act impudently.

Con. Why then do you wonder so much at our habit?

Innk. I know the difference between a private man and a prince, between a man and a woman; but I don't understand the difference between a monk and no monk.

Con. What difference is there between a poor man and a rich one?

Innk. A fortune.

Con. And yet it would be unbecoming in a poor man to imitate a rich man in his dress.

Innk. Very true, as rich men dress nowadays.

Con. What difference is there between a fool and a wise man?

Innk. Sometimes more than there is between a rich man and a poor man.

Con. Are not fools dressed in a different manner from wise men?

Innk. I cannot say how well it becomes you, but your habit does not differ much from theirs, if it had but ears and bells.

Con. These indeed are wanting, and we are the fools of this world, if we really are what we pretend to be.

Innk. What are you? I don't know; but this I do know: that there are a great many fools that wear caps and bells, who have more wit than those that wear caps lined with fur, hoods and other marks of wise men. Wherefore it seems to me a ridiculous thing to display wisdom by the dress rather than by the fact. I saw a certain man, more than a fool, who wore a gown hanging down to his heels, a cap like our doctors, and had the countenance of a grave divine. He disputed publicly with a kind of gravity, and he was as much made of by great men as any of their fools, and was more a fool than any of them.

Con. Well, what would you infer from that? That a prince who laughs at his jester should exchange coats with him?

Innk. Perhaps decency would require that it should be so, if your proposition be true,

that the mind of a man should be represented by his habit.

Con. Your argument comes near to me, indeed, but I am still of the opinion, that there is good reason for giving fools their habits.

Innk. What reason?

Con. That nobody might injure them if they say or do anything foolish.

Innk: Well, I am not saying that this very thing does rather provoke some people to injure them, so that often from fools they become madmen. Nor do I see any reason why a bull that gores a man, or a dog or hog that kills a child should be punished, while a fool who commits graver crimes should be suffered to live under the protection of his folly. But I ask you, what is the reason that you are distinguished from others by your dress? For if every trifling cause is sufficient to necessitate a different habit, then a baker should wear a different dress from a shoemaker, an apothecary from a vintner, a coachman from a sailor.

And you, if you are priests, why do you wear a different habit from other priests? If you are a layman, why do you differ from us?

Con. In early times monks were only the purer part of the laity, and there was then only the same difference between a monk and a layman as between an honest, frugal man, that maintains his family by industry, and a highwayman that gets his living by robbing. Afterwards the bishop of Rome bestowed honors upon us, and we ourselves gave some reputation to the habit, which is neither simply lay nor sacerdotal. But such as it is, some cardinals and popes have not been ashamed of it.

Innk. But as to the fitness of it, whence comes that?

Con. Sometimes from the nature of things themselves, sometimes from the customs and the opinions of men. Would not all men think it ridiculous if any one should wear a bull's hide, with the horns on his head and the tail trailing behind him on the ground?

Innk. That would be ridiculous enough.

Con. Again, if any one should wear a garment that would hide his face and his hands, and expose his private parts?

Innk. That would be more ridiculous than the other.

Con. The very pagan writers have commented upon those who wore transparent stuffs, indecent even for women. It is more decent to be naked, as we came upon you in the stove-room, than to wear a transparent garment.

Innk. I fancy that the whole of this matter of apparel depends upon custom and the opinion of the people.

Con. Why so?

Innk. It is not many days ago since some travelers lodged at my house, who said that they had traveled through certain countries recently discovered, which were wanting in the maps of the ancient cosmographers. They said that they came to an island of a very

temperate air, where it was held to be the height of indecency to cover the body.

Con. It may be they lived like beasts.

Innk. On the contrary, they lived a life of great humanity. They lived under a king, whom they accompanied in the morning to the daily labor, which lasted not above an hour of the day.

Con. What work did they do?

Innk. They dug up a certain kind of root that served them in the place of bread, and is more pleasant and more wholesome than wheat. When this was done, then every one went away to his own affairs, and did whatever he had a mind to. They bring up their children religiously; they avoid and punish vices, but none more religiously than the crime of adultery.

Con. What is the punishment?

Innk. They forgive the women, for this concession is made to the sex. But for the men that are taken in adultery this is the

punishment: that all his life afterwards he shall appear in public with his private parts covered.

Con. A mighty punishment, indeed!

Innk. Custom has made it for them the greatest of all punishments.

Con. When I consider the force of your argument, I am almost ready to allow it. For if you would expose a thief or a murderer to the greatest ignominy, would it not be sufficient if you should cut off his clothes above the buttocks, and cover the parts thus indecently exposed with a wolf's skin; make him wear a party-colored pair of boots, and cut away all that part of his doublet that covers the throat and arms, leaving his breast and shoulders bare; shave off one side of his beard, leave one part hanging down, and curl the other; put a slashed cap upon his head, with a huge bunch of feathers, and so expose him publicly? Would not this make him more ridiculous than to put him into a fool's

cap and bells? And yet soldiers deck themselves in this trim every day, and are well enough pleased with themselves, and find those who think it beautiful, though there is nothing more ridiculous.

Innk. Nay, there are honest citizens, too, who imitate them as much as possible.

Con. But now if a man should attempt to imitate the dress of the Indians, who clothe themselves with the feathers of birds, would not the very boys, all of them, think him a madman?

Innk. Indeed, they would.

Con. And yet, that which we admire is far more insane than this. But, although it is true, that nothing is so ridiculous but custom will endure it, yet, it cannot be denied that there is a certain fitness in garments, which wise and prudent men have ever regarded; and on the contrary, there is a certain lack of fitness, which will, to all wise men, seem evident. Who does not laugh when he sees a

woman dragging a long train at her heels, as if her quality were to be measured by the length of her tail? And yet some cardinals are not ashamed to follow this fashion in the length of their gowns. So masterful is custom, that there is no altering of a fashion when once it has been fixed.

Innk. Well, so much for custom. But tell me what you think; whether you consider it better for monks to differ from others in their garb, or not.

Con. I think it simpler and more Christian, not to judge of any man by his habit, if it be but sober and decent.

Innk. Why don't you cast away your cowls then?

Con. Why did not the apostles always eat of all sorts of food?

Innk. I cannot tell. Tell me yourself.

Con. Because an invincible custom prevented. Whatsoever is deeply rooted in the minds of men, and confirmed by long use, has

become, so to speak, a part of their nature, can never be removed at once, without great danger to their peace of mind; but must be done away with by degrees, as a certain one plucked out a horse's tail, hair by hair.

Innk. I could endure it, if the monks had all one kind of dress; but who can stand so many different ones?

Con. Custom has brought this evil, which brings everything. Benedict did not invent a new habit, but used the same that he himself wore and his disciples as well, which was the habit of a plain, honest layman. Neither did Francis invent a new dress; it was the dress of simple country people. Their successors have by new inventions turned it into a superstition. Do we not see some old women at this day, who keep to the dress of their times, which is more different from the dress now in fashion than my dress from yours?

Innk. Indeed, we do.

Con. Therefore, when you see this habit, you see only the survival of early centuries.

Innk. why, then, has your garment no special sanctity?

Con. None at all.

Innk. There are some of your cloth who boast that these garments were divinely instituted by the Virgin Mother.

Con. These stories are the dreams of men.

Innk. Some despair of being able to recover from a fit of sickness unless they be wrapped up in a Dominican's gown. Nay, there are some who will not be buried unless in a Franciscan's habit.

Con. They that persuade people to these things are either fools or cheats, and they that credit them are superstitious. God will know a rascal as well in a Franciscan's habit as in a soldier's coat.

Innk. There is not so much variety in the feathers of birds as in your gowns.

Con. Well, is it not a good thing to imitate nature? how much better than to seek to outdo it.

Innk. I wish you would outdo it in the variety of your beaks.

Con. Come, I will be an advocate for variety, if you will permit me. Is not a Spaniard dressed after one fashion, an Italian after another, a Frenchman after another, a German after another, a Greek after another, a Turk after another, and a Saracen after still another?

Innk. Yes.

Con. And then in the same country what variety of garments is there in persons of the same sex, age and degree ! How different is the dress of a Venetian from a Florentine, or of both from a Roman, and this only within Italy alone.

Innk. I believe it.

Con. Thence came our variety as well. Dominic took his dress from the honest plowman in that part of Spain in which he lived ; Benedict from the countrymen of that part of Italy where he dwelt ; Francis from a husband-

man of a different place, and so on with the others.

Innk. So that for aught I see, you are no holier than we, unless you live holier.

Con. Nay, we are worse than you, in this, that if we live wickedly, we are a greater stumbling-block to the simple.

Innk. Is there any hope of us, then, who have neither patron, nor gown, nor rule, nor profession.

Con. Yes, my good man. See that you hold it fast. Ask your god-fathers what you professed in baptism, what garment you there took on. Do you want a human rule, you who have made a profession of the gospel rule? Or do you want a man for a patron, you who have Jesus Christ? When you married, did you make no profession? Consider what you owe to your wife, to your children, to your family, and you will find that you have a greater load upon you than if you had professed the rule of St. Francis.

Innk. Do you believe that any inn-keepers go to heaven ?

Con. Why not ?

Innk. There are a great many things said and done in this house that are not according to the gospel.

Con. What are they ?

Innk. One man drinks too much, another talks bawdy, another brawls, another slanders his neighbor, and last of all, I don't know whether they keep themselves pure or not.

Con. You must prevent these things as much as you can. If you cannot hinder them, surely you must not, for profit's sake, encourage these wicked things.

Innk. Sometimes I am not very honest with my wine.

Con. How so ?

Innk. When I find my guests warming up a little too much, I put more water into the wine.

Con. That is certainly a smaller fault than selling wine made out of dangerous drugs.

Innk. But tell me truly: how many days have you been on this journey ?

Con. Almost a month.

Innk. Who takes care of you all the while?

Con. Are they not well taken care of who have a wife and children and relations and kindred?

Innk. Oftentimes.

Con. You have but one wife; we have a hundred. You have but one father; we have a hundred. You have but one house; we have a hundred. You have but a few children; we have them without number. You have but a few kinsmen; ours are infinite in number.

Innk. How so?

Con. Because the kinship of the spirit is wider than the kinship of the flesh. Thus Christ has promised, and we learn the truth of that which he has promised.

Innk. In truth you have been an agreeable companion for me. Strike me dead if I don't

like this discourse better than drinking with our parson. Do us the honor to preach to the people to-morrow, and if you happen to come this way again, know that there's a lodging ready for you.

Con. But what if others should come ?

Innk. They shall be welcome if they be such as you.

Con. I hope they will be better.

Innk. But amongst so many bad ones, how shall I know which are good ?

Con. I'll tell you in a few words, but in your ear.

Innk. Tell me.

Con. —.

Innk. I'll remember it, and do it.

THE ABBOT AND THE LEARNED WOMAN.

ANTRONIUS. MAGDALIA.

Ant. What sort of furnishings do I see about me ?

Mag. Is it not neat ?

Ant. How neat it is I cannot tell, but I am sure it is not very becoming, either to a maid or to a matron.

Mag. Why so ?

Ant. Because here are books lying about everywhere.

Mag. And have you lived to this age, and are both an abbot and a courtier, and never saw any books in a lady's apartment ?

Ant. Yes, I have seen books, but they were French; but here I see Greek and Latin ones.

Mag. Why, are there no other books but French ones that teach wisdom?

Ant. But it becomes ladies to have something that is diverting to pass away their leisure hours.

Mag. Must none but ladies be wise and live pleasantly?

Ant. You very improperly connect being wise and living pleasantly. Women have nothing to do with wisdom. Pleasure is ladies' business.

Mag. Ought not every one to live well?

Ant. I am of the opinion they ought so to do.

Mag. Well, can anybody live a pleasant life that does not live a good life?

Ant. Nay, rather, how can anybody live a pleasant life that does live a good life?

Mag. But do you approve of living ill if it be but pleasantly?

Ant. I am of the opinion that they live a good life that live a pleasant life.

Mag. Well, but whence does that pleasure

proceed? From outward things, or from the mind?

Ant. From outward things.

Mag. O, subtle Abbot, but thick-skulled philosopher! Pray tell me in what you suppose a pleasant life to consist.

Ant. Why, in sleeping, and feasting and liberty of doing what you please; in wealth and in honors.

Mag. But suppose to all these things God should add wisdom; should you live pleasantly then?


Ant. What is it that you call by the name of wisdom?

Mag. This is wisdom: to know that a man is only happy by the goods of the mind. That wealth, honor and descent neither make a man happier nor better.

Ant. If that be wisdom, fare it well for me.

9/ Mag. Suppose now that I take more pleasure in reading a good author than you do in hunting, drinking or gaming; do I not seem to you to live pleasantly?

Ant. I would not live that kind of life.

Mag. I am not inquiring what you take most delight in, but what is it that ought to be most delighted in ? 

Ant. I would not have my monks pay much regard to books.

Mag. But my husband approves of it. But what reason have you that you would not have your monks bookish ?

Ant. Because I find they are not so obedient; they answer back out of the decrees and decretals, from Peter and from Paul.

Mag. Why then do you command what is contrary to Peter and Paul?

Ant. I don't know what they teach; but I cannot endure a monk that answers back, nor would I have any of my monks wiser than I am myself.

Mag. You might prevent that well enough if you but exert yourself to get as much wisdom as you can.

Ant. I haven't leisure.

Mag. Why so?

Ant. Because I haven't time.

Mag. What, not leisure to be wise?

Ant. No.

Mag. Pray, what hinders you?

Ant. Long prayers, the affairs of my household, hunting, my horses, and attendance at court.

Mag. Well, do you think these things are better than wisdom?

Ant. Custom has made it so.

Mag. Well, but answer me one thing: suppose God should grant you this power, to be able to turn yourself and your monks into any sort of animal that you had a mind; would you turn them into hogs and yourself into a horse?

Ant. By no means.

Mag. By doing so you might prevent any one of them from being wiser than yourself.

Ant. It is not much matter to me what sort of animals my monks are, if I am but a man myself.

Mag. Well, and do you look upon him to be a man that neither has wisdom nor desires to have it?

Ant. I am wise enough for myself.

Mag. And so are hogs wise enough for themselves.

Ant. You seem to be a kind of sophistress, you argue so smartly.

Mag. I won't tell you what you seem to be. But why does this rubbish displease you?

Ant. Because the spindle and the distaff are a woman's weapons.

Mag. Is it not a woman's business to mind the affairs of her family and to instruct her children?

Ant. Yes, it is.

Mag. And do you think so weighty an office can be executed without wisdom?

Ant. I believe not.

Mag. This wisdom I learn from books.

Ant. I have three-score and two monks in my cloister, and you will not see one book in my chamber.

Mag. A pleasant outlook for the monks.

Ant. I could endure books, but not Latin books.

Mag. Why so?

Ant. Because that tongue is not fit for women.

Mag. I want to know the reason.

Ant. Because it contributes nothing to the defence of chastity.

Mag. Why, then, do French books that are stuffed with the most trifling stories contribute to chastity?

Ant. But there is another reason.

Mag. Let it be what it will, tell me plainly,

Ant. They are more secure from priests, if they don't understand Latin.

Mag. Nay, there's the least danger from that quarter, according to your way of working, because you take all the pains you can not to know anything of Latin.

Ant. Popular opinion is with me, because it is such a rare thing for a woman to understand Latin.

Mag. Why do you tell me of popular opinion, which is the worst example in the world to be followed? What have I to do with custom, that is the mistress of all evil practices? We ought to accustom ourselves to the best things, and by that means that which was uncustomary would become habitual, and that which was unpleasant would become pleasant, and that which seemed unbecoming would look graceful.

Ant. I hear you.

Mag. Is it becoming a German woman to learn to speak French?

Ant. Yes, it is.

Mag. Why is it?

Ant. Because she will then be able to converse with those who speak French.

Mag. And why, then, is it unbecoming for me to learn Latin, that I may be able daily to have conversation with so many eloquent, learned and wise authors, and faithful counsellors?

Ant. Books destroy the brains of women, who have little enough at the best.

Mag. What quantity of brains you have left I cannot tell; as for myself, let me have never so little, I had rather spend them in study than in prayers mumbled thoughtlessly, in all night banquets, or in the draining of huge bumpers.

Ant. Bookishness makes folks mad.

Mag. And does not the chatter of your pot-companions, your idlers and your buffoons make you mad?

Ant. No, they pass the time away.

Mag. How can it be, then, that such pleasant companions should make me mad?

Ant. That's what they say.

Mag. But I by experience find quite the contrary. How many more do you see grow mad by hard drinking, unreasonable feasting, and sitting up all night tippling, which destroys the constitution and the senses, and has made people mad?

Ant. By my faith, I would not have a learned wife.

Mag. But I bless myself that I have gotten a husband that is not like yourself. Learning both endears him to me and me to him.

Ant. Learning costs a great deal of pains to get, and after all we must die.

Mag. Pray tell me, sir: Suppose you were to die to-morrow, had you rather die a fool or a wise man?

Ant. Why, a wise man, if I could come at it without taking pains.

Mag. But there is nothing to be obtained in this life without pains, and yet, let us get what we will, and what pains soever we are at to attain it, we must leave it behind us. Why then should we think much to be at some pains for the most precious thing of all, the fruit of which will bear us company into another life.

Ant. I have often heard it said that a wise woman is twice a fool.

Mag. That indeed has been often said, but it was by fools. A woman who is truly wise does not think herself so, but on the contrary, one who knows nothing thinks herself to be wise; and that is being twice a fool.

Ant. I cannot tell how it is, but as pack-saddles do not become an ox, neither does learning become a woman.

Mag. But I suppose you cannot deny that pack-saddles look better on an ox than a mitre on an ass or a sow. What think you of the Virgin Mary?

Ant. Very highly.

Mag. Was she not bookish?

Ant. Yes, but not with such books as these.

Mag. What books did she read?

Ant. The canonical hours.

Mag. According to what usage?

Ant. Of the order of Benedictines.

Mag. Indeed? What did Paula and Eustochium do? Did they not converse with the holy scriptures?

Ant. Ay, but that is a rare thing now.

Mag. So was a block-headed Abbot in old times, but now nothing is more common. In old times princes and emperors were not less eminent for learning than for their governments. And after all it is not so great a rarity as you think it. There are both in Spain and Italy not a few women, and noble ones, too, that are able to vie with men, and there are the *Moricæ* in England and the *Bilibaldicæ* and *Blaurericæ* in Germany. So that unless you take care of yourselves it will come to that pass that we shall be professors of divinity in the schools, and preach in the churches and take possession of your mitres.

Ant. God forbid!

Mag. Nay, it is your business to avert it. For if you hold on as you have begun, even the geese themselves will preach, rather than endure a parcel of dumb shepherds. You see the world is turned up side down, and you must either lay aside your dress or perform your part.

Ant. How came I to fall into this woman's company? If you'll come to see me, I'll treat you more pleasantly.

Mag. After what manner?

Ant. Why, we'll dance and drink heartily, and hunt and play and laugh.

Mag. I can hardly forbear laughing now.

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